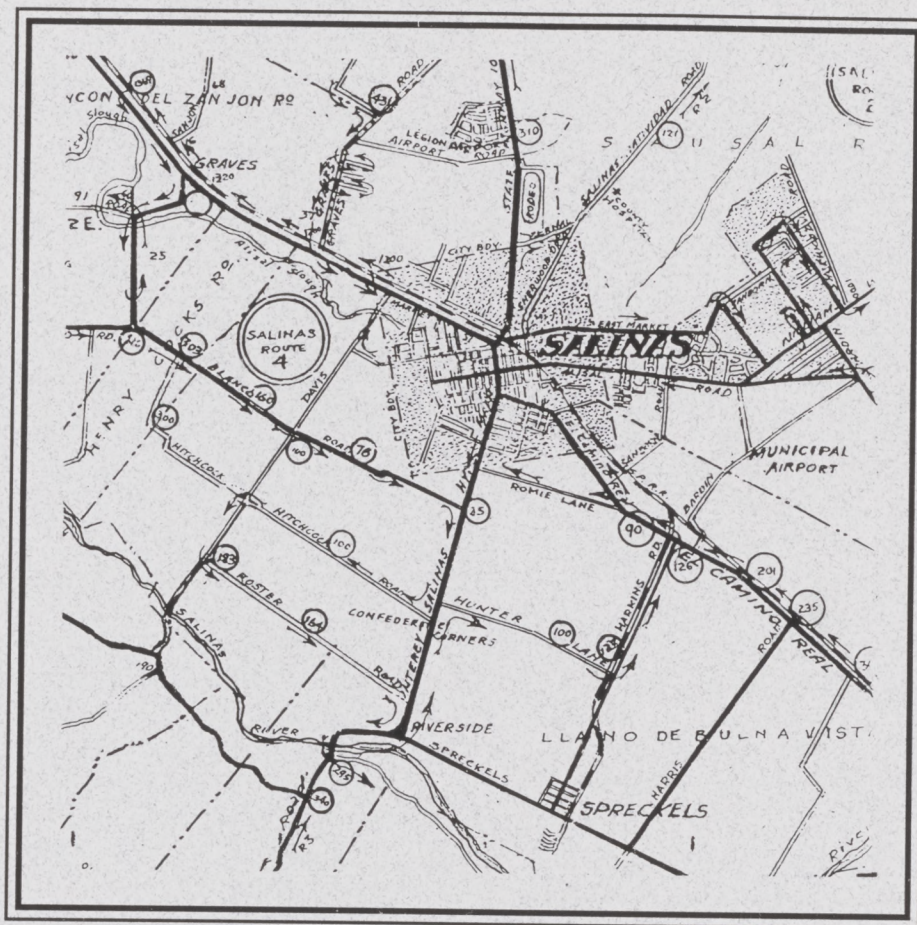


MODIFIED HABS/HAER REPORT

# SPRECKELS SUGAR COMPANY FACTORY No. 1

SPRECKELS, CALIFORNIA



## VOLUME 4: APPENDIX

Prepared for:  
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Pleasanton, California

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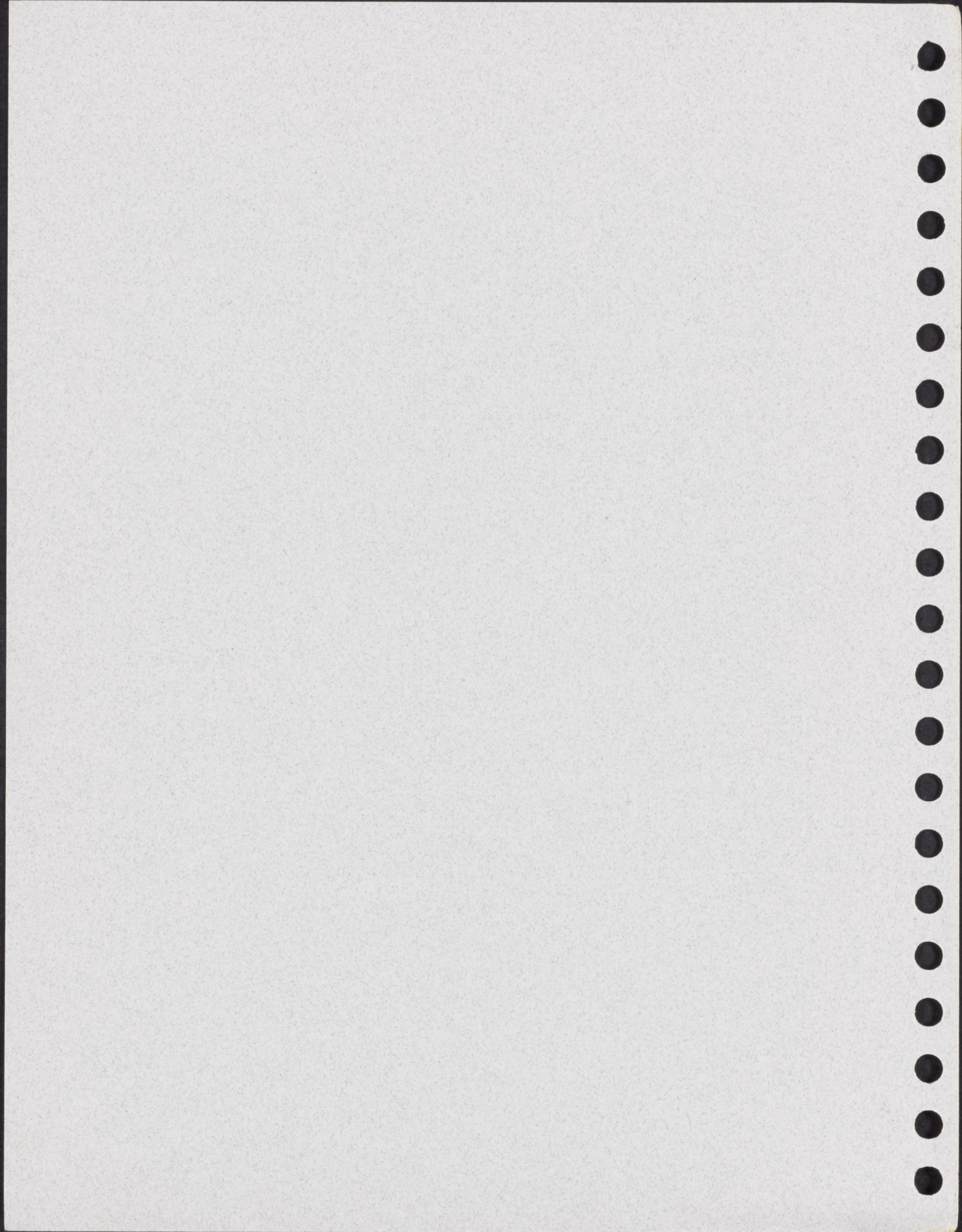


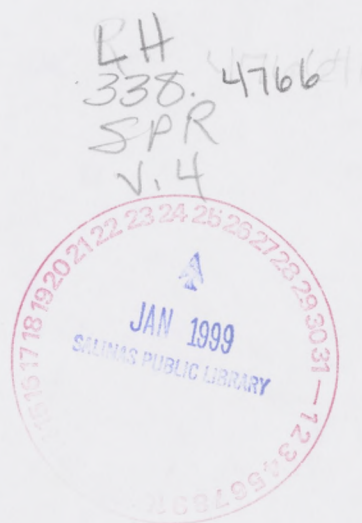


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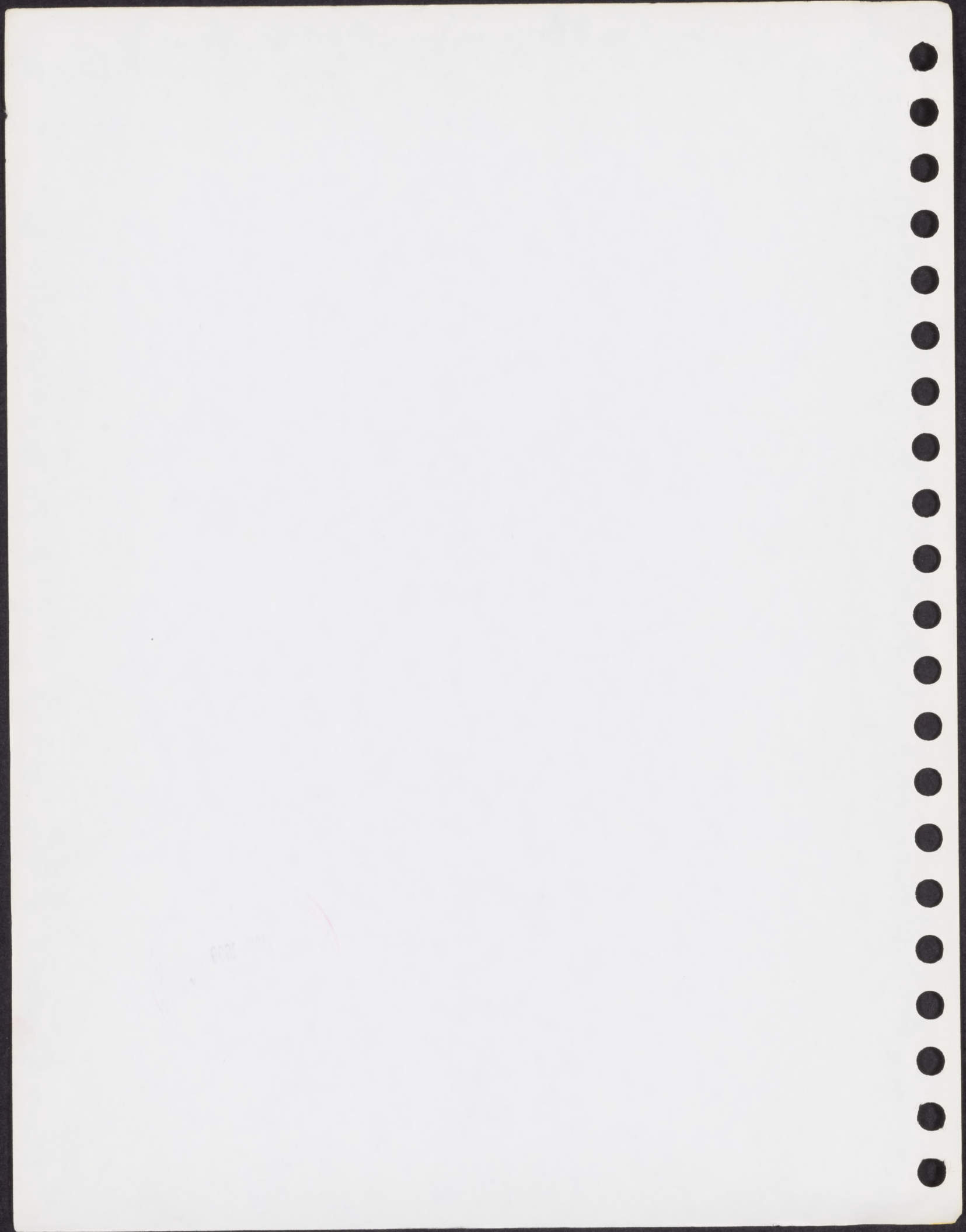
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I. JOHAN "HANS" JONGENS

INTRODUCTION:

This interview is one of four interviews regarding Factory 1 in Spreckels, California. The study was sponsored by the Spreckels Sugar Company and the County of Monterey.

Born in Indonesia (Dutch East Indies), Hans Jongens began his career with the sugar industry in France and Holland. In 1971 he served as Manager for the packaging operations of the Spreckels Sugar Company in Mendota, California. In 1974 he was appointed General Manager for factory operations at the Spreckels, California plant. He remained in this position until the plant closed in 1982.







INTERVIEW WITH HANS JONGENS

Interviewed by Bjorn Olson

May 16, 1993

Bjorn Olson: When did you start as manager of Factory 1?

Hans Jongens: In 1974.

BO: And what was your experience before that?

HJ: I started in the engineering department. After the engineering department, I went into operations in the Mendota Factory in 1963.

BO: So they pulled you from there to manage this one?

HJ: From '71 we moved to manage the packaging operation first, then after a couple of years they made me manager here.

BO: So you managed for how many years total here?

HJ: From '74 to about '82.

BO: So you were the Factory 1 site manager?

HJ: Right.

BO: Would it be the Ag Division?

HJ: No, total operations—both the operations and packaging and warehousing. The agricultural department was managed by an agricultural manager.

BO: How many people worked in your division?

HJ: Well, under my responsibility, about 750 people.

BO: That was the operations inside the main building?

HJ: Right.

BO: Boiler House?

HJ: Everything—from processing beets to producing sugar.

BO: Pulp drier, packaging.

HJ: The pulp drying and packaging operations were in separate buildings outside the main building.

BO: Tell me what it was like. You came here and you walked onto the largest beet sugar factory in the world. That's quite a responsibility. How many tons of beets were







processed daily during a normal campaign?

HJ: We processed approximately 6,000 tons. The factory has gone through a number of managers that did some good and some bad for the factory. The beginning years were kind of difficult -- a lot of breakdowns in equipment. One of the problems in the first three, four years we did a lot of repair work. And then we got some new equipment also that helped a great deal. After that things smoothed out—

BO: What was the new equipment?

HJ: Well, they spent a lot of money in the evaporator station and added new evaporators, moved the old evaporators out, a large job, and added a new boiler, retired some of the old boilers, low-pressure boilers. And in beet receiving we added new equipment to handle the beets, which helped a great deal.

BO: What was the old equipment that handled the beets?

HJ: The beets are transported into the factory with water, in flumes. There were beet wheels that elevated the beets from the lower area into the higher area in the flumes. We replaced those with Archimedes screws, which worked a lot better than the beet wheels.

BO: The beet wheels, how old were they when you arrived?

HJ: They were original equipment.

BO: So then you put the beet screws in. Was that something that was designed by Spreckels staff?

HJ: The Engineering Department designed it, because we got the idea from Europe. They used it in Europe. In Holland they originally used them to pump out of the water from inundated land. That's where the idea came from.

BO: Did you bring that idea into the factory? Because you are probably Dutch.

HJ: Yes.

BO: Was your family background growing beets at all, sugar beets?

HJ: No, my background goes back to farming. My dad worked in the tobacco industry, growing tobacco like they do in Virginia, but this was in Indonesia. My grandparents were dairy farmers in Holland.

BO: So you have quite an extensive farming background. The beet screws then would help the beets come down the flume. They'd get to the beet distributing wheel. Was that still in place—that great wheel that I've seen? And then it would distribute at the (beet) south end of the main factory.

HJ: Both beet wheels were replaced by screws. The rest was the same, the beets were then elevated with a beet drag to the top.

BO: Well, along the flume too, if I read the drawings correctly, there was a downhill flow of water, and then it would meet a screw. The screw would bring it up—six feet? And







then it would flow down again. Then it would go to a much larger screw, and into to the factory.

HJ: Yeah.

BO: So what did you do with the old wheels?

HJ: They were cut up and junked.

BO: They were sixteen feet, twenty-eight feet, in diameter?

HJ: Yeah, they were 28 feet in diameter.

BO: So it went up six stories high. The drawings that you sent me, it's kind of ambiguous what happened up there (in the wash house), and how they got down to the lower floor.

HJ: Originally, in the original installation at the factory, they had bucket elevators to bring the beets up. We replaced I think two or three elevators with one beet drag. And they would dump the beets in two hoppers, and the hoppers would feed the beets to the beet slicers.

BO: Did the people have elevators in Factory 1 to get up there?

HJ: No, there was one freight elevator. The rest is all stairs.

BO: So the beets arrived in a hopper; this is something like a bin. And then that bin would drop them into slicers.

HJ: The slicers, yes.

BO: How did the slicers work?

HJ: I don't know if you've ever seen any of the slicing operations at the other factories, but it's all basically the same. If you can stop a second, I can show you some—

HJ: (Showing beet knives to Bjorn) These are rotating big wheels with beet knives in them that turn around. This is the edge that hits the beets.

BO: Where were these made?

HJ: In the U.S.—or England and Germany.

HJ: You know what shoestring potatoes look like? That's what the knives slice the beets into.

BO: Did you find that the beet wheels, or any of the equipment when you arrived at the factory—was from Germany?

HJ: No, because a lot of the equipment had been changed when I came in the factory already. After the Second World War, they made a lot of changes, and during that war they







extracts the sugar out of the beets. And they changed the diffusion batteries that were in the factory, removed those, and put new style diffusers in, and that changed the layout.

BO: That would be on the first floor, in some of the center portion of the factory?

HJ: Yeah, yeah.

BO: They were bigger diffusers?

HJ: They were larger, because the original plant was designed for 3,000 tons.

BO: And now you're doing 6,000?

HJ: We doubled the size.

BO: So during World War II they were producing much, much more.

HJ: Yeah, the production started going up after that.

BO: And that machinery was American made.

HJ: Yeah, that was made in America.

BO: Back to the slicers—did you guys call (the shoestring-cut beets) cossettes?

HJ: Cossettes is exactly what it is.

BO: You still use that term. I read about the process in a *Scientific American* in 1900.

HJ: I see.

BO: So these would go around on some sort of wheel.

HJ: Yeah, on a big wheel.

BO: At that point the beets are free of all the dirt?

HJ: They're being washed in the water with a tumbling action. And the sprays in the drags helped also to clean off the dirt.

BO: And then these cossettes would then fall into the diffuser.

HJ: Into the diffuser, right.

BO: You had a series of them.

HJ: The diffuser has a series of cells, and they go from one cell to the next. There's a counter flow of water going through the diffusers.

BO: It was warm water?

HJ: Hot water. At the point where the cossettes are exhausted is where the fresh







HJ: Hot water. At the point where the cossettes are exhausted is where the fresh water goes in. So you have a maximum extraction of the sugar out of the beets.

BO: Kind of like osmosis.

HJ: Osmosis, yeah, the hot water replaces the sugar in the cells.

BO: And from there then it's juice that we have.

HJ: What they call the raw juice.

BO: The raw juice.

HJ: A lot of impurities in it.

BO: At this point, what kind of people would be managing that equipment? Would you have like a group of workers up at the hopper, a group of people at the cutter or slicer?

HJ: The hopper operation is all automatic. The people that work in the slicer station, all they do is they watch the operation and replace knives when they dull. There's a lot of wear, and occasionally a rock comes through and dulls the knives and you have to replace them.

BO: Then in the diffusion battery you would have people watching—

HJ: Yes, there are operators that watch the entire beet end operation.

BO: So that would be 20 people involved in that portion?

HJ: No, just one or two.

BO: In the total process in Factory 1, how many people were employed on a 24-hour shift?

HJ: In the factory operations itself, I would say 60 or 70.

BO: I'm assuming that the shifts remained 12 hours.

HJ: Twenty-four hours. The shifts were 8-hour shifts, three times eight. In the old days it was two times twelve. Of course then we only ran about a hundred days. So with the new setup we planted beets in the winter and we could have an additional campaign which would add to the operation another hundred days. So at least 200 days, plus.

BO: Well, really in this climate you could almost have the factory full time, and be bringing beets in.

HJ: I think in Mendota the longest campaign we ever ran was 300 days. That's a long time.

BO: So from the diffusion batteries, where would this juice go to?







HJ: Well, two things. The exhausted cossettes go one way, to the pulp dryers, because pulp is another product that we sell for cattle feed—pulp that's been pressed and dried.

BO: OK, the pulp would go—that would be conveyed over to—

HJ: To another building.

BO: To Building 118, the Pulp Dryer Building.

HJ: Yeah, the Pulp Dryer Building.

BO: And that conveyor carried the wet pulp into the Pulp Dryer Building.

HJ: They installed that in the '20s, the pulp dryers. Because, originally they just pressed the pulp and then would sell the pressed pulp to the farmers in the old days. But later on they found that you can dry them and store them for a long time, and it would be a lot more economical and you can get more money for it.

BO: Did they deliver that to the farmers, or did the farmers come in and pick it up?

HJ: We would keep the dried pulp in storage and sell it in sacks or bulk to whoever needed it throughout the whole state.

BO: Then the juice would go into—

HJ: The raw juice would go in another direction, and go through what they call a purification process, where they use lime.

BO: The lime from the lime kilns.

HJ: The lime kilns, yeah.

BO: Then into a carbonation process.

HJ: In the carbonation process you extract all the impurities.

BO: And is all now still on the ground floor of Factory 1?

HJ: It's on the second floor, not on the ground floor. It was on Section 9.

BO: And what was below them?

HJ: First floor pumping stations.

BO: The diffusion batteries are on the ground floor?

HJ: Yes. (The first floor and ground floor are the same in this section of Building 1.)

BO: And then up to the carbonation tanks, which are sort of the northerly third of the building.







HJ: It would be on the south side of the building. The beets come in on the south side of the building.

BO: And then they move northward through the building.

HJ: Right. This is north, this is south.

BO: So we're at the northerly portion. Then the carbonation tanks would be on the second floor. And what was below the carbonation tanks?

HJ: You have a lot of pumps to circulate the juices through the tank. You have to recirculate a lot of the juices and pump it to the settling tanks (to settle and separate the mud from the beet juice).

BO: Unfortunately, I never saw the machinery.

HJ: Well, I think it would be wise if you could take a look at any of the factories that we have.

BO: Which would be the best? Manteca, do you think?

HJ: Manteca would give you a good idea. Manteca, or Mendota, whatever is the easiest to get to.

BO: Manteca seems to be the next oldest, 1916.

HJ: 1916 yeah, but a lot of it has been changed. The building is still the old building, but all the insides are changed. Nothing original there anymore.

BO: When you were manager, was the lime trestle in place? Were they still using that?

HJ: Yeah.

BO: And that was like a bucket, a large bucket which would pick up the lime and bring it in overhead—

HJ: Overhead, and dump it in the kiln. That's quite an operation.

BO: Yeah, it must have been.

HJ: In the old days they had about 1,500 people in a day, running the plant, something like 700 people per shift. In those days they would take lime rock by hand and throw it in the buckets.

BO: Oh really? That's why they needed 1500.

HJ: It was kind of an archaic operation. That's in the old days.

BO: When was the trestle built?







HJ: The trestle, I don't know which year it was built, but it must have been in the original design of the plant.

BO: So this would drop into the kiln. And the kilns, I saw them, and they're massive, and they're very large. I noticed there are several layers of different kinds of bricks too. There's a layer of fire brick and then there seemed to be another layer of a middle kind of brick, and an outer red brick. They must have been very hot.

HJ: Oh yeah. We mixed the lime rock with coke, which would heat up the lime rock, and through the heating process the calcium carbonate would release the carbon dioxide gases that are in the stones, and then the lime rock would come out as calcium oxide, quicklime. Then the carbon dioxide was collected and pumped into the carbonation tanks. What you do is you break down the calcium carbonate to calcium oxide and carbon dioxide gas. You pump the gas over to the carbonation tank, and take the lime, dump it in water, and make milk of lime, and run that through the carbonation tank, and then the carbon dioxide bubbles through the lime solution and you make calcium carbonate again. You're taking it apart and putting it back together. In this process it'll pick up a lot of the impurities.

BO: I was really impressed by the efficiency of the use of lime.

HJ: Oh yeah, lime is a wonderful product.

BO: Then it goes back in the soil.

HJ: It does a lot of things that are necessary for maintaining our society.

BO: I've noticed throughout the years—I've brought many old plans, which I'd love to go over if you have time—but I noticed there were lime waste ponds along the river. I'm curious if it was so beneficial to beet agriculture, why would there be a lime waste pond? It would seem like they would dump it out in the fields.

HJ: Well, through the years they have sold a lot of lime to farmers. Of course you only need a certain amount to condition the soil. Some farmers don't need it and some do. But it's a cost-effective thing. If the farmers are in this area, it would pay off to do it; if they live further away, it might be too costly to transport it there.

BO: And they might be able to get it somewhere else; the quarries were delivering it to them.

HJ: The factories in the valley would provide lime for people in the San Joaquin Valley. In the Salinas Valley you only need so much.

BO: So the lime waste ponds then would leach back into the river?

HJ: No, lime was collected in the lime ponds. You can still see a lot of them standing there. They have been built up over the years.

BO: As a sediment, like a sedimentary layer.

HJ: Yes.







BO: Now, that lime could in theory be mined again.

HJ: Yes, you can use that—actually in Mendota they take the waste lime and burn the waste lime and run that through the process.

BO: Do they have lime waste ponds in Mendota?

HJ: No, only a small one. You discard a certain amount each day, in order to keep the purity up.

BO: Were you at the factory during the recent earthquake?

HJ: The last one?

BO: The Loma Prieta.

HJ: No, I wasn't there.

BO: I had heard that the whole area where the ponds were, there were many kinds of flumes that opened up, and there was outgassing from under the ground into the air 20 feet, and you could watch these plumes coming up. I was curious what might be down there.

HJ: I never heard that. I don't know. I've never heard that story.

BO: Another curiosity in the drawings you sent me was the tunnel that went underneath the—

HJ: Boilers.

BO: —the north end of the factory, to Sugar Warehouse 5.

HJ: They had something like—I don't remember anymore—20 or 30 boilers, old boilers, and they used either coal or wood in the old days, and the ashes from that would be dumped in the tunnel, and then they had a little donkey, a rail car, that would collect the ashes and run it out at the south end of the factory.

BO: So it wasn't really related to packaging, which was what we all thought, because it went over to the Packaging Warehouse.

HJ: No. What you maybe saw was another railroad that would bring sugar that was packed in bags and moved over to the warehouses. That's on the ground floor (and partially in a tunnel under the storeroom building).

BO: And how long was that tunnel being used? Was it in use up to closing?

HJ: No, it was abandoned when they got natural gas in this building, which was before the Second World War, I don't know, maybe in the '30s or '40s. They abandoned the ash business.

BO: So they had a donkey pulling this, down in this tunnel?

HJ: Yes.





BO: It must have been a little donkey. I think the tunnel is only six feet tall at best.

HJ: Yeah, it was narrow.

BO: Is any of it still open, do you know? I'd love to get a photo of it.

HJ: If you can get in the factory, which I doubt at the moment. They won't let anybody in. But it's still there.

BO: One thing I've not quite figured out—when the factory was originally built, between the boiler house and the main building were two spurs of a narrow gauge.

HJ: Well, that's the railroad that had little carts, and on the carts they would transport the 100-pound sacks of sugar that they had in those days.

BO: So they didn't bring the wood and the coal to the boilers.

HJ: I don't know how they did that. I'm not sure.

BO: Because it was very shortly after that they took those lines out, and built the intermediate buildings between those two. It seemed like a very short time the narrow gauge ran between the two, and I haven't really understood why.

HJ: I don't know. I'm not sure on that operation. The only thing I know is that sugar was transported from the north end of the factory, where it was packed, to the Warehouse 5.

BO: Where was your office?

HJ: The office was in a little building on the west side of the factory. That building was built during the war, and was a ladies' rest room in those days. They hired a lot of women to help run the factory. The old factory superintendent's office was in the building above the diffusers on the third floor.

BO: It must have been very noisy.

HJ: Well, those were the old offices.

BO: What was your typical day like? You would start work at what time?

HJ: Eight o'clock.

BO: And work till eight? Until the 8-hour shift started?

HJ: No, we worked from 8 till 5.

BO: When did the 8-hour shift start?

HJ: The 8-hour shift started 8 to 4 and 4 to 12, 12 to 8 —three shifts.

BO: But at some point there were two 12-hour shifts.







HJ: That was before my time, I think they were from 8 to 8, something like that.

BO: You don't know when they went to the 8-hour work day?

HJ: Eight-hour work day?

BO: When the federal mandated it?

HJ: Probably before the unions came in. As I remember, they had that same 12 hours schedule in the cane ..

[END OF SIDE 1; BEGIN SIDE 2]

HJ: . . . sugar industry too. And we know a lot of things that went on there.

BO: Was Claus Spreckels involved in Indonesia?

HJ: No, his furthest operations were in the Philippines. He had two factories in the Philippines. And of course he started the growth of the sugar industry in Hawaii, and in Maui, he was very much involved.

BO: I've been reading about that—very much involved. I believe he controlled 80% of the sugar plantations.

HJ: Right.

BO: Tell me something about the reservoir that was up on the other side of the Salinas River. Did that bring drinking water in for people at the factory, or did that service the town, or both?

HJ: No, it was used mainly for the factory process. Of course it was drinking water also.

BO: And on the site were artesian wells?

HJ: Yeah.

BO: How many wells were on the factory site?

HJ: They had a lot of wells that were abandoned, and then we drilled some new wells. A well will only last so many years.

BO: And then you just move it.

HJ: Move it, yeah.

BO: Your office was built was during World War II; it was the ladies' bathroom at one time. It was probably wood. [NOTE: During World War II Spreckels hired many women. At that time, they built the ladies' room.]

HJ: Yes.





BO: And it was between Building 118, probably, and the other long warehouse.

HJ: Yeah.

BO: Which I think is Warehouse 57.

HJ: Right.

BO: And then there were also some—

HJ: Ponds there. There were used for the condenser system. They used condenser water to create vacuum in the vacuum pans and in the evaporators, and the water was run through cooling towers and dumped in the ponds to cool it off and then recycled.

BO: Did you live in the town of Spreckels when you first came?

HJ: No, I lived in this house. There was a factory manager's house for the manager, but the manager before me, he abandoned the idea and started living in Salinas, and they sold the house.

BO: That was the two-story house, I think?

HJ: Yeah.

BO: Who was the manager before you?

HJ: John Cooley. He lives in Fresno at the moment.

BO: Did he work in other factories as well?

HJ: He was manager in Mendota for a long time, and Manteca also.

BO: Was your employer Amstar or Spreckels Sugar?

HJ: Well, originally it was Spreckels Sugar, and then later the name was changed to Amstar Corporation.

BO: And now it's back to Spreckels Sugar.

HJ: Right.

BO: When you worked in your office, how many people did you work with?

HJ: We had several—I had a secretary, and then we had the various department heads. I had an assistant, the assistant factory manager, and then next to him was the plant engineer for mechanical operations of the factory.

BO: Did you have regular staff meetings?

HJ: Yeah, we had regular staff meetings.





BO: Did they have a conference room? How often did you have a staff meeting?

HJ: Every week.

BO: It would be Friday, to report on everything from the week?

HJ: Well, usually in the middle, Tuesdays or Wednesdays.

BO: It's such a huge operation, and volume that came through the factory itself. It seems like eight hours a day wouldn't be enough.

HJ: Well, usually you went home whenever you were finished. It was never 5:00; it was always later.

BO: Did you have anything to do with the contracting of the beets? Did you have any dealings with the farmers?

HJ: No, that was strictly agricultural.

BO: While you were manager, how many acres of land did the Spreckels Company have that they owned, and how much was leased, to bring in the 6,000 tons?

HJ: Spreckels originally owned a lot of land, and a lot of it has been sold off over the years. In my time they only had a very small portion left. In King City, they had some ranches—King City Ranch—but those were minor compared to the amount leased or contracted from farmers.

BO: Did you contract them by the weight of the beets as they came in on their wagons?

HJ: You would of course pay by the amount of beets that they would deliver by weight, plus account for the sugar in the beets. They would test that.

BO: At the tare lab?

HJ: At the tare lab.

BO: What was the going rate for beets? Let's see, you started in 1971, and then we went into a recession. Did beet prices go down?

HJ: No, I don't think beet prices ever went down. The contract allowed for a standard price, depending on sugar content. Then depending on the sale of sugar, they would get an additional amount, if we sold sugar at a higher price.

BO: And the contract was written for a year?

HJ: Each year a new contract was written, yes.

BO: That would guarantee that they would grow it for that length of time.

HJ: Right.





BO: I read somewhere that you have to be very careful when the beets come in, that you want the highest sugar content—that you have a narrow window of time that the beets are good with the sugar.

HJ: That depends on the weather also. In hot weather beets deteriorate faster, especially in the Valley, near Sacramento and San Joaquin. They wouldn't care to have beets laying there for several days. Here it isn't too bad. The weather is kind of cool and it really doesn't affect the beets too much.

BO: So a truck could come in, unload the beets, and they could sit there for a while, a couple of days, and then you would begin gradually. Where would they lie? Where was the beet pile?

HJ: We had some beet hoppers where they dumped the beets. But most of the beets came in by train. The major portion came in by train, and they would dump those from the car into the flume, and actually the storage areas were the cars.

BO: I had thought that the trucks had taken over from the trains.

HJ: Not in this area, because of the volume. We had 70- or 80-car trains each day.

BO: And they were the standard size boxcar on the Southern Pacific Line?

HJ: Seventy tons per car.

BO: And they'd go in, as they did with the narrow gauge, up on that—

HJ: Trestle.

BO: Would you call it a high line dump?

HJ: Yeah, you can probably call them the high line.

BO: And then they go into the beet bins, and then the flumes. It's a very interesting process. I didn't realize that. So the Southern Pacific line went through there. Did they continue then—they would come into these beet bins. There were five of them still, when you were—

HJ: Yeah, somewhere around there, five, six.

BO: That was the original number built in 1897.

HJ: We had maybe—we used about—each bin had two flumes, you know. I don't know how you count them, but if there were three beet bins, each of them had two flumes. So there were six flumes, and we used maybe, oh, five maybe.

BO: And then each train with 80 cars—how long is a car?

HJ: Well, we would bring in a set of 5 cars to a stop, to the end of the bin, dump the cars, pull them out, and bring in a new set—switching them around.





BO: And the beet bins, originally they were about 800 feet long. So I think a normal car would have—

HJ: It's about 40 feet. We only used maybe seven cars at a time.

BO: How would the cars tilt? Was there a gearing mechanism inside?

HJ: No, they would open up from the bottom. There were doors in the bottom.

BO: I haven't seen that invention. I'm still looking at photos from 1910.

HJ: There are some beet cars in other areas that would completely dump over, like the coal. But you have to have special cars for that.

BO: I'm curious—I've seen so many drawings, and they're beautiful drawings. Did they have a drafting room?

HJ: When they built the factory?

BO: Hundreds of people?

HJ: They brought in people—a lot of people were brought in from Germany, because Claus Spreckels went to Germany, he learned about the sugar industry there. And when he started building the factory, he brought a whole bunch of people from Germany. They must have made the drawings.

BO: The calligraphy is beautiful.

HJ: Oh yeah. They spent hours and hours drawing those things. Nowadays it all goes on a computer. You don't have the time to do that anymore like we did—first in pencil, then in ink. I've done it. It takes hours.

BO: Yes, I was impressed. While you were manager, was the drafting room still on site?

HJ: No, I think the drafting was done in the office building that was in front of the factory. That was torn down in—

BO: In 1964.

HJ: We only had—we did some drafting in the factory manager's office building. We only had one draftsman.

BO: Oh really?

HJ: Most of the drafting was done in the main engineering department in San Francisco.

BO: They still have city offices there, on Pine Street.

HJ: Pine Street. That's where I spent a couple of years designing the Mendota factory.





BO: In designing the Mendota factory, did you design the machinery, or the floor plans, or—

HJ: Each engineer had a particular part of the factory, and my part was in the lime reburning process, with a rotary lime kiln. And then there was another process called Steffens process. That's where they de-sugarized molasses. Any sugar left in the molasses would be extracted in that process called the Steffen process.

BO: While you were manager, that took place at the south end.

HJ: The south end of the factory.

BO: The rotary lime kilns—how were they different from the huge lime kilns, the big three, that I've seen? And what part of the sugar process did they contribute to?

(The rotary lime kilns were used to burn calcined lime from the lime ponds.)

HJ: The rotary lime kiln is a horizontal rotary kiln. It turns. The vertical kilns are stationary, and they don't move. The lime rock goes in at the top, comes out at the bottom. The lime coming out of either kiln is treated the same. You get the lime rock, and you have to for the Steffen process grind it up, and the powder will be mixed in with a diluted molasses solution. And then the lime powder reacts with the sugar in the solution, combines in a calcium saccharate form, which would be filtered off, and then transferred to the carbonation station, for the recovery of the sugar.

BO: So the rotary lime kiln would rotate the lime as it's burning.

HJ: There's a flame in there, an oil or gas flame, that would calcine the calcium carbonate—the same process as you have in a vertical kiln. You have calcium oxide coming out, and the carbon dioxide gas would be recovered and used in the carbonation process.

BO: The rotary lime kiln, then, was only used in the Steffen process. So were the kilns located near the Steffen station?

HJ: Yeah. The lime from the rotary lime kiln was very efficient in the Steffens process.

BO: Is the rotary lime kiln—is that a new invention, or was that original?

HJ: In this factory they had a couple of old small kilns, where they recalcined a small portion of the lime. They knew about it, and there were plans to build a big kiln before the war already, but they never did it. Then when we built Mendota the idea was transferred by the Vice President of Engineering, transferred and we tried it out in Mendota. It was the first kiln that was ever tried, and it is the only one still in existence in the beet sugar industry.

BO: Oh really?

HJ: Yeah. Nobody ever duplicated it.

[Tape skips]

BO: Would you like to take a look at some drawings? I'll show you the mixing room.





HJ: (Looking at floor plan of Building 1) . . . lime cake is filtered out from the juices.

BO: And where did that occur?

HJ: That occurs above the carbonation tanks, on the fourth floor.

BO: So in the plan I'm looking at floor #4 (and a section through the saturation tanks). What's happening in here? There's some kind of a hopper, it looks like, here.

HJ: No, this is a tank probably. The tank wasn't there anymore, but this may have been a tank where they collect the solution and then run it through the saturation filters.

BO: And the sat filters were filtering?

HJ: That's probably the way it was, because these are larger filters and these are smaller filters. They still use these ones. These were taken out.

BO: This would form the lime cake, is that correct?

HJ: Yeah.

BO: As the precipitate product filtered out.

HJ: I think this tank was after the filters, and then the clear juice is pumped into this tank, and this juice is delivered to the evaporators.

BO: Then the evaporators are down below.

HJ: They're on this side.

BO: Those are rather large, the evaporators, I believe. Were they also called calandrias?

HJ: Calandrias.

BO: Yes. Hundreds of holes in them. That's a stair. Probably the most uninteresting walk, but very efficient.

HJ: Amazing they make a drawing for that.

BO: They probably made one for each, even though it's a duplicate, one for each run. Here are the drivers for mud drags. What would this do?

HJ: The chain would fit into the sprockets. It would drag the chain. This is for the mud drags. The drags where the mud would be filtered off and dumped into a little hopper, and then the drag would move that out.

BO: Where was this occurring?

HJ: This also was on the fourth floor, in the south end.





BO: So this would be fourth floor at the level of the hoppers, before it goes to the slicer.

HJ: Right.

BO: To make the cossettes.

HJ: Right.

BO: I'm getting it. My training is landscape architecture and architecture. I'm learning all about sugar. This is—

HJ: This is the beet wheel.

BO: That you had to replace. I understand the castings may still be available for these.

HJ: I don't know. I think they've all been sold off. Scrap metal.

BO: Here we are at the lime kiln, with a trestle, which we've talked about. Then there's a Raymond mill engine here.

HJ: That's for grinding the lime.

BO: You'd grind it, and then how would it be delivered? Would it go up and then down into the kiln, or would it be grinding—

HJ: No, this is grinding of the burned lime, the calcium oxide. That would go into hoppers, into the lime hoppers, and from the hoppers you would feed it into the process.

BO: This is I think one of the most interesting drawings (the lime kilns). It could be on Mars, or in a Star Trek movie. This one is a detail of trolley car block. This would be—where would this occur?

HJ: (Drawing of Trolley Car Block) This may be in the hoists for the trestle of the lime kiln.

BO: Part of the trestle system.

HJ: Yeah. That's where they would hoist the little hoppers that carry the lime rock that was dumped in the lime kilns.

BO: This drawing is the Raymond mill room. Originally it was called that. I'm curious, then there's a stamp on it that says Extraction Plant.

HJ: That's the Steffens plant, for molasses extraction.

BO: A while back then it was called Extraction Plant. Then later it assumed the name Steffen?

HJ: Steffen, right.





BO: And that was located east of the factory.

HJ: Next to the lime rock kilns in the beet end of the factory.

BO: I see. So each one of these is a Raymond mill.

HJ: Right.

BO: And the Raymond mill—

HJ: Grinds up the lime.

BO: Was this moved out back to the south end?

HJ: No, no. This was the thing. We only ended up with two new mills, instead of four old ones.

BO: That is the Setting Plan for Russell engine. The Russell is—this was in 1897. These must have been replaced.

HJ: Yeah, this wasn't there.

BO: The Russell engine keeps cropping up in lots of drawings, and not being an engine—is it just a particular motor system—

HJ: It's a steam engine. This is a steam cylinder. It's a particular brand, I think, that they used.

BO: I see. This is a boiler shop brake. It's quite a drawing, and I'm wondering how that figured.

HJ: Boiler shop brake—this is a tool to bend iron plates; it's what they call a brake. The boiler shop is where they did a lot of repair work for the factory. It was just a—you put your metal plate in here and then bring the thing down, you bend iron, you know, like this.

BO: And that iron that's bent would be used for many different areas.

HJ: Yeah. We may still have it in that boiler shop, I don't know.

BO: Maybe we could use it in the museum. This drawing, I believe it's only part of—

HJ: Economizer. It's for the boilers.

BO: What would they do?

HJ: An economizer used the hot exhaust gases to heat inlet air for the boilers. It's a heat exchanger—preheating of inlet air, combustion air, into the boilers.

BO: Details of the ends in the drum from the granulator.





HJ: The granulator is where you dry the sugar. It's a rotary drum that tumbles the sugar through hot air or cool air. First you dry it with hot air, and then you cool it with cool air.  
[END OF SIDE 2]

Transcribed by Kathleen E. Goss, phone (415) 648-0774  
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ORAL HISTORIES:

II. THOMAS RYAN

INTRODUCTION:

This interview is one of four interviews regarding Factory 1 in Spreckels, California. The study was sponsored by the Spreckels Sugar Company and the County of Monterey.

Thomas Ryan began work with the Spreckels Sugar Company in 1951. He has held many different positions with the company; his most recent position was that of Farm Properties Manager. It is to Mr. Ryan's credit that much of the historical information contained within these four volumes is available for research.

The interview was held in his home in Spreckels, California, where he resides with his family.





INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS RYAN

Interviewed by Bjorn Olson

July 21, 1993

BJORN OLSON: I'm speaking with Tom Ryan. It's July 21, 1993. Tom, we talked before. You worked at the Spreckels factory. You started working, you said, in 1951.

THOMAS RYAN: I started with the sugar company in 1951 at the Sacramento office. It was the sixth floor of the California Fruit Building in Sacramento, the district agricultural office.

BO: Did they call it District 2 at that time? What I'm seeing in *Honey Dew News* is that District 1 was Spreckels, California; District 2 comprised Manteca and Woodland. And then I think we have District 3 later at Mendota.

TR: I think that there were two agricultural districts. There was District 1 and District 2. District 1 was the area around Factory 1 and the central coast, and District 2 was everything else, and the headquarters were in Sacramento. Very shortly after that, they divided the agricultural districts up and attached them to each one of the factories, and then they called the districts District 1, District 2, District 3, and then eventually when Mendota was built, District 4; so the Factory 1 - District 4 relationship. But when I went to work for the company, the district manager's office was in the Fruit Building in Sacramento, and there were a number of field men at Woodland, and there was one field man at Manteca. And there were offices there, but they were the local offices, and the agricultural manager ran the thing from Sacramento.

BO: What was the title of your job?

TR: At that time it was an Assistant Field Superintendent, which is a buck private—not even a buck private.

BO: What did you do?

TR: Well, I was hired to be—my title was Assistant Field Superintendent, and that's a rookie job. I was fortunate in that at that time they decided that they would place hires—one from the agriculture department, one from the financial department, one from the operating department—each one of them would hire a new man, and they would become a little group, and they would be called trainees, and they would be taken through each one of the departments, and in fact in the operation portion of it actually work in each job—get out and spend one day weighing beets, and then poking them down the flumes, and end up on the cutting deck in the packaging. And so there were three of us; the financial department never came up with one, couldn't make up their mind to hire anybody, and there was nobody with the financial department. So there were three of us, and we did just that; we started out with the agricultural department, and we rode with practically every field man, and he told us what he did, and the agricultural superintendent, district manager. Each person would take us for a day and tell us what he did and show us what he did. That went along fine for several months, and then all of a sudden, my God, we've got to do some other things, and it sort of fell apart. So that's what I did. So I got a good introduction to a good part of the company.







BO: At that time, the Spreckels operations, how much land did they cover, owned and leased? It's my understanding that they owned a certain portion, and then leased the greater portion of all of the holdings for growing beets.

TR: I couldn't tell you precisely at the time that I started. I've never known precisely at any given time how much they owned and operated. I know that the total amount that they might have owned and operated in the Central Coast was close to 50,000 acres, but it's very difficult to tell at what given time all of that came together. It probably didn't; that was probably the total, and it never was that great at one given time. I don't know that there are any records that show how much they owned and leased at any one particular time, except for maybe 1913.

BO: I have three references. One shows 46,000 acres at one date, and that's in the 1940s. Then we have another one later, 66,000 acres, I believe to be the top number at the time. You have 50,000 in there.

TR: Well, all numbers I tried to add up, and I may have missed some. It depends a little bit on some of the stuff that they might have listed in the Sacramento River area. There were a number of ranches that we carried on the books in the Sacramento River area—Walnut Creek and those areas—and the company only owned the oil, gas, and mineral rights. But they were producing oil, gas, and mineral rights, so obviously they were on the books. But owned or operated in the context of farmable, or at least close to being farmable—grazing land and farmable land—may not have reached that, because there were some of these that were simply oil, gas, and mineral leases. It's a possibility that if you were to take those out of the 66,000, given that they were included, you would get closer to the 50,000 number I've got. But I don't have those documents that show a listing; I simply went through maps and took acreage off of maps, and made a list.

BO: But we know we've got at least 50,000 in general, for a good 30 or 40 years.

TR: Well, we could easily say 50,000 to 60,000.

BO: In just the Salinas Valley area, excluding the Central Valley. Now, when you were out at these fields, and you saw a field superintendent, what would they do?

TR: Well, the field superintendent, the first thing that he does is he—well, not the first thing, but his job is to make the liaison between the grower and the company, and he, as field superintendent, did that, and still does today—contracts with the growers—knows Joe Blow, and knows that he's planning on growing some beets, and wants him to grow them for Spreckels, and brings a contract out and gets him to sign it on the dotted line. The price of what he gets for the beets is based on the cost of sugar and that sort of thing.

BO: Is the grower necessarily the owner of the land, or is the grower sometimes a contractor?

TR: Well, in California, in the fifties and still today, mostly the grower is an operator, and is a lessee and not the owner. There certainly is a fairly large cadre of owner-operators, but there would be more lessees. And those could be much larger operators than the owners. Don't get the idea that we're talking about huge owners and little tiny farmers; it's the other way around, it's big farmers and little tiny landowners, particularly, say, here in this valley. This guy owns 20 acres, and another party, his brother, owns another 20, and a grower-shipper operates maybe 2,000 acres. So generally, if you're talking about who's the







biggest, it's not generally the landowner, unless you're talking about S.P. Land Company, Newhall, or somebody like that; yes, they're the big guy, and they've got smaller operators.

BO: You became field superintendent in the valley here. When was that?

TR: Well, what I did when they built this thing up, I came to Salinas, and I was loaned to the district engineer, and that was the time that the company was just selling their land along Harris Road, and the plant breeding farm was on Harris Road, and they wanted to move it in the area around the factory, and they wanted to relevel all of that land and move their operation from Harris Road to Spreckels Boulevard, around the factory, where it is today.

BO: Harris Road is south of the factory site?

TR: South of the factory site. Actually Spreckels Boulevard, presently today, at the tracks becomes Harris Road. It used to be that Spreckels Boulevard extended all the way down through the ranch, and Harris Road came in and hit it at 90 degrees. It's not a rancho boundary, but it's the Spence subdivision boundary.

BO: That's the Spence tract of Llano de Buena Vista Rancho.

TR: That's right, Harris Road is on that line, and that line extends across the river. I came here and I did the surveying on that property for the purposes of releveling it. We drilled new wells, and put new pipeline in. That's not a normal assistant field superintendent's job, but since I had an engineering background they asked me to do that—well, they didn't ask me to do that, they told me to do that, so that's what I did. When I finished with that project, then I went to King City, and I was assistant field superintendent at King City for 18 months, and I assisted J. Byron Larson, who was the field superintendent there, in his duties of contracting, financing, supervision of harvest. That's what field superintendents do—arrange the harvest, schedule the harvesting, that sort of thing.

BO: Did you also supervise the laborers, or is that up to the grower?

TR: About the only arrangements we had that touched on the labor deal would be where we were financing the crop, we would advance for thinning and hoeing and that sort of thing; part of the budget would be for those purposes, and we would simply assure ourselves that the guy had—we didn't make any advances for thinning until we knew that the thinning had been done. We would put in a weekly report of all the thinning and hoeing and planting. Whatever was being done in the district, the field superintendent makes a weekly report and gives, by grower, how many acres are done, what percentage, and what the percentage of completion is, so that management starts to get some idea of projecting when the harvest is going to be, and how much. If we had a very wet winter, let's say, and nobody planted in February until the 15th of March, that would make a big difference in when a factory was going to start, how late, how early. That's what a field superintendent does. When he finishes scheduling the harvest, tying up the strings on that, giving the harvest reports, being sure that all the growers are paid and there isn't a problem with somebody not getting credit for the right load, then he simply goes out and starts the process of contracting the next crop. By the time he gets it harvested, there's not much down time when he starts the process.







BO: Then your weekly report you would hand to Larson, your superintendent.

TR: And he would give it to the agricultural superintendent, who at that time was Mr. Paulson, and Mr. Paulson would receive that from each one of the field superintendents—the one at Hollister, the one at Gilroy, the one that had the local district, the one that had the area down between Gonzales and Greenfield. Our area that I was involved in actually wouldn't be that far south. The man who lived in King City handled all of the beets south of King City and everything up through Soledad Mission.

BO: And that was the superintendent?

TR: The field superintendent.

BO: So that's Ranch 3.

TR: He lived on Ranch 3.

BO: And Ranch 3 extended up to roughly Ranch 8, (what I know as) Soledad.

TR: Well, there is a gap there.

BO: At Greenfield?

TR: Yes, see, Ranch 3 actually only goes down this side of Metz, so there is some of a gap there. Ranch 8 (in 1950) did not belong to the sugar company. Ranch 11 at Greenfield belonged to the sugar company, and they were in the process of selling that; or just previously, probably at the same time that they sold the land here at Spreckels, they had sold all of the property on Ranch 11. And Ranch 11 and Ranch 3 don't quite come together, but they're the closest. I'm not even sure where Ranch 8 was, probably at Soledad at the bridge.

BO: Yes, I see old San Vicente Rancho is part of it. Originally it was 7,300 acres, and they let go of it pretty early, I think. I was unclear why, except that I believe that it was on the upper bench of the Salinas River plain, and it was much more of a hardpan, difficult to grow beets in.

TR: It could have been. San Vicente Road runs out of Soledad. That's the street that runs out of Soledad. It's in grapes now, and it's the kind of land that you just characterized.

BO: So I think they let it go for that reason. I think that Claus Spreckels liked it a lot himself, that area. Isn't Paraiso Springs near there?

TR: Well, Paraiso would be on the other side of the valley. Paraiso is a long way from Ranch 8, I would guess.

BO: I thought it was near the Romie property, which was there, the farming colony.

TR: I'm not sure about the ranch numbers; I'm not sure where 8 is. I always thought 8 was at Soledad, just across the bridge.

BO: That was my understanding too.





TR: But see, that's not near Paraiso.

BO: Oh, I see; OK. I saw something somewhere, that Claus Spreckels had a cottage that he bought at Ranch 8. Maybe that's wrong.

TR: Well, that could have been, but he probably also spent some time up in Paraiso, and Paraiso is up in the Santa Lucias. I think you're right about both of those, but they weren't at the same place.

BO: And then yesterday I saw a photograph of Claus Spreckels riding in a buggy with C.T. Romie, and they were good friends.

TR: Yes, and Romie—I think that all may tie in at a time with Salvation Army and the Fort Romie. See, that's at Greenfield.

BO: Oh, Ranch 11.

TR: No, not Ranch 11; it's north of Ranch 11. Ranch 11 boundary is the road that runs out from the Catholic church, and runs all the way out to the bridge on the Arroyo Seco River. And the Fort Romie whatever it was, was on the mission side of that road.

BO: Oh, I see. That clarifies that.

TR: And if you need any history on the Fort Romie situation, you should talk to Mrs. Terry, who lives out there and is the local historian. She's the wife of the former undertaker in Soledad, and knows all about that. She's got all kinds of pictures. She's not a professional historian, but she's got a lot of stories. And if you remember the story in the manuscript, that they tried to farm the ground, and it was rocky and it was windy, and they finally had to give up. Precisely where that happened I don't know, but I think not on Ranch 11, but just north of Ranch 11. Now, part of Ranch 11 is rocky like that, but it's much better soil, and I don't think either Romie or Spreckels—they probably had big operations on those farms. They were large farms.

BO: Ranch 8 was very large. I know that he settled half the ranch with families, and the other half he kept for the company. It included Gonzales, and that area, according to the 1907 Spreckels *Courier* reports, was doing very well in the production of beets. I noticed that at the time that they sold off the San Vicente Ranch 8 was the same time that those tenants would have come into ownership of their land, given the Spreckels plan, a ten-year plan basically; these families could come, and would own their land after a ten-year growing period. That seems to coincide, about 1918. You had another story for me about Ranch 8, something about John Steinbeck, I believe.

TR: Well, I don't know; we should get a map out on those numbers, because I may be getting confused about those numbers.

BO: It was on one of the ranches you mentioned. . .

[Conversation is interrupted]

BO: We are looking at a map of Monterey County Water Company dated March 1907. It is showing the area around the Soledad town, and we're looking at—what is this, Tom?







TR: Salvation Army Colony. But see, some of these numbering systems—look at this: Ranch Number 2, Spreckels Sugar Company. This is showing where the Arroyo Seco meets the Salinas River. As you can see, the map doesn't even show the town of Soledad, and there's a little confusion about just where exactly it is. But that's an interesting designation there, because I'd never seen Ranch 2. (Ranch 2 was sold in 1909.) Here's Ranch 8.

BO: 1919, and it looks like it's the full area, as I understand the original purchase, 7,281 acres.

TR: OK, now let's tie that down, since we've been talking about it. Ranch 8 starts at the edge of Soledad, and is bounded by the state highway.

BO: Toward Gonzales, which is north, is that correct?

TR: That's right.

BO: And they've subdivided, I see, into eight areas. One is basically riparian, along the river; Lot 2 near Soledad, up through Lot 8, which borders at the upper northern end of Ranch 8 on the Lanini property. Now, here is Ranch 2, same date of March 1919, and we have Soledad here.

TR: OK, well, I've been just confused by the way that was laid out there, why that would tie in to Ranch 2, but that's precisely where Ranch 2 was. And this makes this Ranch 8, and see, that whole story that I told you about took place not there, but—what I'm confused here about is as you go out of Soledad today, just a few miles, you cross a bridge, and there's no bridge on the highway here, or any reason why the—well, it could have been further down here—Ranch 8 over here. (TR picks up the Steinbeck story again.)

BO: Well, this looks like the pattern off of this earlier Monterey County Water map. This is the Salvation Army Colony here; here we have the Arroyo Seco coming in here to the river; and that Ranch 2 then extends up. We have Soberanes property up through the Bianchi property.

TR: Right, and that's where it is, and that was part of the company's holdings when I was down there. That was eventually sold, and is now owned by DeArrigo, and that takes care of all of this, and this line here—so this fits like this then; that's Ranch 2. And you see what I was saying, Ranch 11 is over here.

BO: That's south of Ranch 2, or south of Ranch 8?

TR: South of 8, by quite a bit.

BO: On the east side of (inaudible).

TR: There's the Paraiso River; there's the Paraiso Road right there. And see, if your cottage was on Ranch 8, it wasn't also on Paraiso Hot Springs, which is at the end of this road back up in here. And this road running out here, I was thinking it was the Arroyo Seco Road down here, but it's this Paraiso Road here, and it's on that side of it. And that's where it was.







BO: You had mentioned that you felt that one of the lots, one of the cottages there, was where there was a scene that perhaps inspired *Of Mice and Men*.

TR: Well, that isn't where I thought it was. You see where the county road crosses the river right here? Well, there's a ranch right over here.

BO: That's Ranch 11, and I have a map. I did come prepared. I have Ranch 3, Frieda Toffler. I have Ranch 10 here, at Chualar. We're now looking at a November 1905 map of Monterey County, showing the original Spanish ranchos and some of the Spreckels ranches. Ranch 11 we have is part of Poso de los Ositos at the northern end of it, bordering the Arroyo Seco Rancho. Then we come up to the Arroyo Seco, then Los Coches. And you believe the *Mice and Men*—

TR: Well, it either happened south of Soledad, or you could make a real case for it being on Ranch 8, and that's right here. Because in the story, the two of them come on the bus and are left off at Soledad, and they walk back to the ranch, it says. And Lenny kills the girl, squeezes the girl to death, and runs down into the river bottom, and runs to the bridge, and George finds him under the bridge, and that's where George gives him the coup de grace in the back of the neck.

BO: This is the Paraiso Road bridge.

TR: It's the bridge—where is the map that shows the bridge? There's a portion of it. Well, see, it's difficult to see the roads on this map because it's just of the ranchos. But you cross the bridge, and after you cross the bridge you make a left turn onto that Paraiso Road, and someplace you had a picture of that.

BO: Ah, there's Soledad. Ranch 8.

TR: Well, that's Ranch 8. See, if he came down the river, and continued right on here, there's a bridge right here, which you characterize as the bridge at Paraiso. You can't see it here; it's beyond here. I can't really think that it's that far away, but one of these pictures—

BO: Could it be this one here? We have the Arroyo Seco.

TR: But you don't see any—well, yes you do. Here it is right here. There's the bridge. See, it says "to Soledad." OK, you cross the bridge, and this is the county road to King City. It's now U.S. 101. And when you get to the adobe station right here, you turn off and you go to Paraiso, you see? It's the bridge that's the El Camino Real bridge across the Salinas River. The Salinas River is way over against the Gabilan Mountains at King City, just right against the side of it at Greenfield. And then it whips around over here, and it whips over here onto the other side of the valley, and this is where the Arroyo Seco comes in. So when you go across this, a lot of people say, "Well, it's a river across the Arroyo Seco." It's not the bridge across the Arroyo Seco; it's a bridge across the Salinas River. And you go to this little station right here, and I guess what confuses me is that the city of Soledad is shown as this little square here of about eighteen blocks, and today the city of Soledad is practically right to the edge of this—cogeneration plant, and it's all built up. So that's consistent. See, then you run out on this road right here, and then you cross the Arroyo Seco, turn like this, and go out Paraiso. Here's the colony, and the mission should show on that map.

BO: The mission is not easily seen on the map.







TR: Well, it ought to show. There it is, right there. And see, there it is; it's right on that road. You zing right out here, you stay right on this road, and this road comes, now, today, into the edge of Ranch 2. You come up like this, and then you go around Ranch 2. There's Ranch 2. There's the Salvation Army, and there's the mission. That's where it is today, and there's a road that runs right up here, and you can run like this and go right around it.

BO: We sort of got sidetracked into John Steinbeck, but let me add a little bit of information I learned from listening to a tape of Paul Pioda's. I didn't realize that Charles Pioda is in *East of Eden*. Did you know or meet Charles Pioda?

TR: No.

BO: I think he died in 1951.

TR: Yes, that was the year that—he probably died just before I came to the— and Paul Pioda died just recently, I think.

BO: 1985. Then you must have become a field super yourself.

TR: Yes, I did after those 18 months of—

BO: Boot camp?

TR: Yes. That by the way was a record; most field superintendents got promoted earlier than that. But the field men down here were not young kids, and Larson was really probably one of the younger ones; Larson stayed down there at King City for years, and then became the agricultural superintendent and eventually the district manager. But there was a fellow over at Hollister named Grover McCandless, who had worked for the Union Sugar Company as a field manager for 20 years, and then worked for Spreckels for 20 years. Grover got to the age where he was ready to retire, and when he got ready to retire they promoted me to his job as the field superintendent for the Hollister district, which was a relatively small district—only the area around Hollister, Picines, and that area, which was good for a good field superintendent, not to take on a great big job, just jump in. I was fortunate in that, and Grover, I went with him every day all during the harvest, and then he retired in the wintertime, and I took over the following spring. But I didn't last there very long because they decided that they really didn't need a field at Gilroy and at Hollister, and they wanted a field man at Manteca. We had one field man at the Manteca factory, and since I had this three or four months of experience, this great experience, they thought it would be just grand to send me over there. So they sent me over there, and they consolidated Hollister and Gilroy into one district, and I became then the field superintendent at Manteca. But being the only man in the agricultural department, I had other duties besides just contracting sugar beets. I had to sell all of the pulp, and there were obvious other things—well, I didn't have an agricultural superintendent, nor a district manager there to do any of the public relations and whatnot, so I was it. And the guy who I replaced was sent to Bakersfield. We had a man in Bakersfield on a part-time basis. Bakersfield had kind of built up, and there had been three or four guys down there, and then it dropped off, and we only had a part-time man in Bakersfield. Bakersfield, Kern County, was building up, and they wanted somebody down there full time, so they sent Bruce Duncan there, and I took over. Eventually at Manteca the full—remember I mentioned the fact that we had a district manager at Sacramento? That was about 1953 or so. They decided to have district managers at each one of the factories.







BO: At each factory. This was, you believe, 1953?

TR: About 1953, maybe 1954. I was over there for a short period of time by myself. Then they sent down an ag superintendent, and I worked with him, and there were other field men who then started reporting in—a man who lived in Los Banos, a man who lived in Patterson, myself at Manteca, and a couple of guys up the river—became District 2, and eventually Ralph Landon came down as the district manager. They closed the Sacramento office and they moved that personnel over to Woodland, and they had an ag superintendent of their own, Walter Buckingham, and a district manager there, and then that's the arrangement that they have now. But that all took place. They were talking about that when I was first at Sacramento, that Sacramento wasn't going to be there for a long time. Actually they didn't move the district manager over to Woodland; what they did was they promoted him to San Francisco and he became the agricultural manager. That was Hugh Melvin, the first agricultural manager at 2 Pine Street in San Francisco, and then they promoted one of the fellows at Woodland to be district manager. Then of course when they opened Mendota, and then subsequently opened the factory in Arizona, they did the same thing. Well, they didn't do the same thing; instead of sending in field men in the beginning, they reversed around. They sent a district manager, and then the ag superintendent, and then he hired two or three field men and assigned districts and that sort of thing. So I started off as a superintendent—my district went to the hills on the other side of the Holly Sugar factory, so the Holly Sugar factory was in my district, and down the west side to about Vernales, and over to Modesto and that area. I was there for not very long—well, I guess it was 1958; four or five years, I guess. And then I came down here as a district engineer.

BO: To Spreckels.

TR: To Spreckels, yes.

BO: Did you move into the house you're in now?

TR: No, I moved into a little place. I'd owned a house in Modesto and sold that house, and moved out here, and was hit between the eyes with the shock of high values. I'd sold a very nice three-bedroom home in Modesto for \$16,000, and it didn't look like it was going to make a down payment on anything practical. So I talked my wife into coming out to Spreckels for just a few months, until we could really scout the area out and find a nice place to stay. Well, we rented a little house over on First Street, and eventually had a couple more children, and had to move to Second Street, and then we outgrew Second Street and we moved to Third Street. I'm not sure just when that was, but I did move to Spreckels in 1958, and I've lived here ever since, and I lived in three company houses, and then eventually when the company sold the houses I bought this one.

BO: When you moved here to Spreckels, you were a district engineer?

TR: I was the district engineer designate, and the fellow who was the district engineer stayed for a year, but he was on special projects. As soon as he left, I became district engineer. I don't know what my title was; nobody told me. I suppose it was assistant district engineer until he left.

BO: Who did you report to here at Spreckels, then?

TR: Well, at the time when I first came, I reported to the district manager.







BO: And the district manager, that's the district agricultural manager?

TR: District agricultural manager.

BO: And then the factory itself had its own management system.

TR: That's right.

BO: When you moved in, you were a middle echelon employee, I guess, management employee.

TR: Lower middle.

BO: And you moved to First Street, which was your first house they made available to you. Is it the same style of house that—

TR: No, it was one of those little what we called the flat-top houses that were built in the fifties, little, small three-bedroom house, pretty small. You know; you've seen them.

BO: I was told that there was a level of houses available to employees—that top management had the better homes, middle management a middle home, and lower management a lower style home.

TR: Well, that's probably true to a certain degree. And then of course there's also seniority involved, and so if you were in a small house and you were in a house, and you needed a bigger house, that was taken into account too, you see.

BO: I would think it's more reflective of a lesser house rented for less, and your salary was less, and you were at a lower level. It was not a company policy, was it, that: "Well, no, you're a lower employee; you can't rent this nice house. This is reserved for management."

TR: Well, I don't know that it was ever written down as a policy. But as you mentioned, it was differential in the rental. But really, I think the range was about from \$28 on the lowest one to about \$40 on the highest one, so it wasn't a big struggle to jump from a \$28-a-month house to a \$40-a-month house, especially when other houses in the area in those days were probably renting for at least \$100 or \$125. It was a pretty good deal, no matter where you were. So it had to do with seniority, and then it also had to do with the pecking order that you were in.

BO: So the company was rather generous in supplying homes, it sounds like.

TR: Well, they had all of these houses, and they tried to keep their employees in them, and so they had a list of people who wanted to come in. The agricultural department, I think, there was a town committee that made these decisions, and it was one person from the financial department, one person from the operating, and one from the agricultural department. I think they really sort of looked at it as sort of a rotation; each one kind of gets to pick. Well, I think there was always criticism of the agricultural department, because they really seemed to have the cream of the crop. The reason for that was because it was the smallest department, and they had one-third of the say. So if they were choosing a house in a rotation around three department heads, and one guy's got eight people working for him,







and the other guy's got two hundred, well, naturally the guy that's only got the eight or ten people working for him is going to be able to do much better for the ten people than the operating manager, who has 200 some odd people, some of them part time, some of them not. Anyway, that's how it worked.

BO: So you moved into your present house, then. So you always worked in Spreckels.

TR: Right.

BO: And as district manager then—you came up in that rank, I guess, you became agricultural—

TR: Property management.

BO: This is a new department.

TR: Right. Well, before that, the district engineers pretty much took care of just the local ranches and that sort of thing. I took on all of the operations of the farming; the agricultural superintendent had done that. And the management of the town of Spreckels, I kind of picked that up somehow or other, by default probably. That put me on that committee. And then we started to spread out, and we took over some responsibility in the beet loading stations in Imperial Valley and whatnot, so the district engineer sort of popped out of the district envelope, and it became a district engineer here—there were always only two district engineers, so there was one on the coast and one in the valley. And we then started reporting to the agricultural manager. From 1958 to 1968 we had developed a number of ranches under schemes by which we would lease the ranch from the owners for fairly long periods of time, 15 or 20 years, and pay them about what their rent had been, leasing it for dry farm, barley, for running sheep, or whatever they were using it for—improve it, put water on it, put sugar beet growers on it, increase the rent to the ranch, pay the owners their \$10, \$15, \$20, whatever they were making on the average, as promised, pay the taxes, and pay off the improvement costs, and hopefully do that in less than 20 years—let's say do that in anywhere from 10 to 15, and then have about 15 years of making some profit and some building up for the next project. Well, we did some of that. The first projects we did, we did on a break-even basis; we just said, "Well, when we get our money back, then that's it, we'll walk away." My boss at the time, John Kendrick, as agricultural manager, decided that, well, we've done quite well, and we've walked away from a lot of rent; why don't we do this on purpose? And so we started doing some of it on purpose, and I developed several thousand acres of agricultural land that ran from, oh, down south of King City up to Willows. He became the vice president of agriculture, and I was reporting to him as agricultural manager, and I jumped up and reported to him as vice president. So we thought that maybe this could become a profit center, and if one person would concentrate on it and leave some of this other stuff off to someone else, back in the mold of the original district engineer, doing just simply maintenance and not going out and developing ranches and whatnot. So I did that, and I became the property manager for the company, which didn't have anything to do with the district. I lived here, and they decided that this was as good a place as any, because by that time we were leasing land in Arizona—from Wilcox, Arizona to Willows, California.

BO: When you developed these thousands of acres you've mentioned, as I understand it, Willows, California is up toward Sacramento. And King City is 50 miles south of where we speak now. Willows has got to be a three-hour drive from here.







TR: Five—well, four hours maybe, if you really speed.

BO: So we're looking at, what? How many miles between King City and Willows?

TR: Well, Willows is 200 and some odd miles.

BO: 300 there, and we've got another 100 down south. That's 400 miles. Now, there's more than a few thousand acres. When you said a few thousand acres between Willows and King City—

TR: That we developed.

BO: That's a tremendous acreage, is it not?

TR: Well, we didn't develop everybody's ranch. First of all, all the ranches had already developed, so we had to find marginal land that was being farmed marginally; we had to find 2,000 acres at—the Tresconi Ranch, south of King City, that he was growing barley and running sheep on.

BO: When you say developed, you mean developed for only beets.

TR: No, developing for row crops. Our policy was that we would only contract a fourth of any particular land that we owned or operated under subleasing arrangements. Only one fourth, and in some cases where disease might be a problem, or insects would be a problem, we would only maybe contract a fifth. So you see, that's one of the problems that you have. You can get lettuce ground, and you can get cotton ground, and you can get cane ground, because they continue to grow that single-crop environment. But sugar beets do not fit into a single-crop environment. It has to be rotated. So in order to get a thousand acres of beets, you have to be running a 4000-acre ranch, and in order to control that 1000 acres, then you have to have some kind of an arrangement to where you have the say, or they just get rotated on into bell peppers and tomatoes and whatever happens to be hot. Now for example here what we did, I came up with a program we called BAIT.

BO: No, here means—

TR: Around Salinas, the valuable land, the land that was \$10,000 an acre in those days. How do you get the growers here to raise sugar beets? It was a beet incentive for tenants. We would lease a piece of this kind of dirt to a farmer who would guarantee to grow us one acre of beets for every acre that he rented. So we would take 400 acres, and say to the Bruce Church Company, who farm 2,500 acres or so, "If you want to lease this ground at Spreckels, this ice cream ground, this top ground, 400 acres, you have to grow 400 acres of sugar beets. And we will rent it to you at"—they knew that our price was below market; it was always maybe about 10% below market. You always got a good deal from Spreckels. And that was a good deal for them, and it was a good deal for Spreckels, because we had long-term tenants. We had people who had been there for—

[END OF SIDE 1 OF TAPE]







Side 2

(Discussion begins regarding a photograph of the collapsed north pier of the Spreckels Bridge; a locomotive engine lies in the Salinas River)

BO: We're talking about one of our photographs; it's of the engine that has collapsed—is it the far northerly pier of the bridge, Tom?

TR: It's the south pier, but it's easterly, the other side of the river.

BO: On the Buena Vista side.

TR: Right.

BO: Of the Spreckels Bridge. Now am I correct? There was a flood; it destroyed the bridge in 1914. They rebuilt it, and then the train came along and—

TR: Collapsed it.

BO: That section collapsed. Do you know why it collapsed?

TR: No, I don't. It's the wooden part of it, and I don't know what kind of reconstruction. I think it was the flood of 1913—I think you referred to it that way—that washed portions of it away. But nonetheless it collapsed, and the engine was laying in the river, and in *Sweet Thursday* Steinbeck used that; he just simply said that a little gal who lived in the boiler, which came out of one of the canneries, that boiler had originally been a steam engine of the Pajaro Valley Consolidated Railroad. Anyway, that's where it came from. Now that's fiction, I suppose, but based, as all Steinbeck stories are, on some matter of truth. Well, it is a matter of truth, because you've got the picture there. You can see that it did collapse, and it probably was scrapped out, and the fish company might have bought it, and she might have lived there. But the other story is that the engine was never recovered, and that the river came up before they were able to salvage it, and when the water went down, the engine was gone, and it went down in the underground river and disappeared, and someplace out there that little engine is still buried. I think that both stories may be hard to believe, but those are both two good stories, and they're probably both fiction. But I don't know; you can take your choice as to what happened to that little engine sitting down there.

BO: That's an original Baldwin engine.

TR: Is it a Baldwin?

BO: I believe so.

TR: Yes. Fabing's got all of those listed out there. It's surprising he was able to do some of the stuff that he did; he got a lot of information.

BO: He did. I found that remarkable. They started with two Vaucain engines and they weren't adequate, and they quickly bought the Baldwins, especially when they opened the Spreckels factory (Factory 1) here. At that point I believe they retired the Vaucain (engines) and sold them. I'm assuming that in 1914, that must be a Baldwin. I was reading that Claus Spreckels was friends with a man named (Joseph) Moore who owned and founded Risdon Iron & Locomotive Works. (Moore at one time worked for Vulcan Iron &







Locomotive Works. He later founded Risdon Locomotive & Iron Works with John Risdon.) Moore was also the designer for the sugar mills in Hawaii, all four of them. He also designed and engineered, along with Hermann Schussler (formerly associated with the Spring Valley Water Company of San Francisco), all of the irrigation lines and pipes for the Spreckels ranches (in Hawaii and California) and the Watsonville plant.

TR: Did you run across a tie-in between Spreckels and the Moore from the Moore Drydock?

BO: It may be the same Moore. Now, the question I have is whether that Moore is related to one of the original resident managers.

TR: Oh, well, there was Sumners Moore, but he wasn't an original manager, and I don't think Sumners Moore was related to them. But there were three little houses over here, and we used to call them the silver houses, and they belonged to the Moore estate. Somehow or other they got this aluminum paint and painted these houses. That's how the name the silver houses. This was when I lived here early on, in the late fifties. There were some problems with those houses. They were rentals, and they were really run down and they were ramshackle. But the story was that they had been moved from the Moore Drydock here, and then put together and remodeled into houses. And they did belong to a Moore estate, and so I assumed that this was the same Moore we're talking about—somehow, related in some fashion. But the funny part about those, I never will forget that there was quite an odor over there, and there was some concern about these houses and the odors. Somehow or other we looked into it, and we found out that those houses had been there for years, and they had never been connected to the sewer.

(Side B)

(This discussion begins in the kitchen)

. . . thirty some odd years ago, there was a bench here and a bench here and a table in the middle of it. I took that out, and took this—what does that say? Oh, this is the linen closet. This is a chimney and a water heater. I took this out and put the stairway up, to go upstairs. But everything else is pretty much the same.

BO: I thought you had a gable end (dormer) in the front.

TR: Well, it doesn't look like that, because a wooden gutter is attached to it. So you don't see it.

TR: But it's not a—well, I suppose you could call it a dormer too. See, this is a gable roof.

BO: Yes, this is a gable roof. This is a shed dormer.

TR: Shed dormer, right. This comes out like a shed. The other side of this comes down, and then right about here—so this group comes down like this. Well, you can see it; right there you can see the hip. And then this comes down like so.

BO: I see. So you have a valley here and here.

TR: So here's your peak here, and then you've got the chimney here.







BO: Actually I misspoke, because the Craftsman Era developed earlier and ..Maybeck was 1911, 1914, in through there.

TR: But you saw a lot of Craftsman style buildings built in the '20s.

BO: Yes, then it got high style inside in the '30s. 1911 often tended to be a little more Queen Anne (Victorian).

TR: Which is what Weeks' preference was.

BO: Look at all that (he built) in Watsonville—

TR: Yes, if you go to Watsonville you don't see anything like this. At least I haven't seen any substantial amount. I don't know how much influence he had on these—you see a lot of them around. I was back East the week before last, and we visited Thomas Edison's and Henry Ford's summer homes in Fort Myers, and that's the style. I mean it's the general style, except with Florida style it's got a 14-foot veranda that goes around it.

BO: It's interesting that they didn't do anything here, which would be more like Weeks—to do an entry with detail inside, which I found to be kind of a clue in a lot of the homes. He liked plaster reliefs.

(tape skips)

(we discuss the Spreckels office building)

TR: . . . on the new building, and so I think I took photographs of that, and there are some places in some drawers over there, I think.

BO: For the office building.

TR: For the new office building. So I took photographs of it every week, out of the window of the new building. That's where we were.

BO: You were clerk of the works for the demolition of the old buildings? Who made that decision? (The Weeks-designed office building of 1898 was destroyed in 1963 by the Spreckels Sugar Company.)

TR: Guy Manual. (Guy Manual was president at that time.)

BO: Was it a nice building?

TR: Oh Yes. It was a jewel. You can see from some of the details.

[END OF TAPE#1]

[SIDE A, TAPE #2]

TR: . . . They contracted beets. . . . so a fellow named Bruce Duncan was sent to Bakersfield to be a full-time field superintendent there, and I went to Manteca to take his





place. He was the only field man at the Manteca factory. So I was field man for a few years, and then I came back over here—that was in '57, '58—and took the district engineer's place when he retired. He retired a year after I got here, so he said, "Well, here, I don't like to mess around with these buildings. You watch this building, the building over there, and you keep your eye on that, and you do this and you do that." He had some special projects that he wanted to finish, so he really sort of gave me the engineer's reins. We were there in the top floor of that old building, and he was always there every day. I saw him at least in the morning and at night, so if I had some questions. So I spent most of that first year all day, watching—well, I didn't watch the building. But we had a lot of things to do. We must have had 15 employees. We were responsible for all of the nuts and bolts that the company was involved in that was outside the factory, on all the company ranches—well, new wells, pumping plants.

BO: When you started in '53, as you developed as manager, how many acres did—

TR: No, I wasn't ever managing during that period of time.

BO: When you came on to the field super. They had the ranch in King City; they had Ranch 1, I presume.

TR: Ranch 1. When I first came, they had just completed the sale of Ranch 11 at Greenfield. Before that they had sold Ranch 2—this was within just a matter of a few years. And about '50 or '51 I think they sold a good portion of Ranch 1.

BO: That was '51?

TR: Was it? I'm not sure. Before I came. But there are records that show when that was done. How big was Ranch 1 at that time? Well, you have to look at the map of Ranch 1. The picture of Ranch 1, and all of the field numbers, do not designate all land that Spreckels owned, because that Ranch 1 was owned and leased. For example, the Fatjo portion of Ranch 1, which was always part of Ranch 1, had been part of Ranch 1 for a long, long time, never ever belonged to Spreckels. Miss Fatjo, who owned it at that time, and Mrs. Harrington, who had inherited that from their great-great grandmother, who was a Spence—Don David Spence was the original grantee of all of this Rancho Llano de Buena Vista. He had a son who was married to a Malarin, and the son died. If you really want to get into an interesting thing—you could spend a lifetime with the history of this particular one—David Stewart Spence died, and his wife, Refugio, inherited the property, and then for a long time, from that period, which was about the turn of the century, until the twenties, there was a lawsuit that went on, on this ranch. But Spreckels started to lease from the Fatjos, I think Mrs. Harrington says the first lease she had was in 1898, right about the time they started planting. I'm rambling a little bit, with the ideas of these ranches, but if you want to have to lug a load of documents, just go up to the court house and see. This thing lasted for a long, long time, and these people were just vicious people, the heirs were.

BO: Cooper and Fatjo?

TR: No, just Fatjo. Where Fatjo comes in, where you lose the Spence name and you pick up the Fatjo name, which then pulls on through, is that she, Refugio, became Refugio Spence. Then when David Stewart Spence died she moved to San Jose and married Fagio. He was just the guy next door. So the Fatjos really are not the family that owned that. But of course Mrs. Harrington is related to her all the way back to John David Spence. She can trace her history all the way back to the original Mexican land grant.







BO: Can I roll this out here? To come back to that earlier conversation. (We unroll a map of Ranch 1 dated 1921).

(tape skips)

TR: . . . when I first came down here. But that doesn't belong. Now this had been sold. All of this had been sold in the early '50s or very late 40s, all of this. And this had been sold even previous to that.

BO: That's Lots 22 through 29.

TR: See, this is right in Salinas, right here. When you get in here, Quinn Tractor Company and all of this. So when I came down here, Ranch 1 came around like this, and then went—this was sold; this also was sold.

BO: 37 through 48, would you say, was sold prior to 22 through 29?

TR: Yes, I think so. And then this piece was sold. This was the portion right here that had to be—this was Merrell.

BO: That's 18 and 20.

TR: Yes. And 12, 13, and 14 were sold to Chesholm. So then in 1951 the ranch came down the river, then up the railroad tracks, up here to this point right here—Lot 6. It went right straight across like that, and that's what was left. This was sold to Tanemura in the '80s, and this was sold to Tanemura and Antel in the late '80s (1980s).

BO: You're talking 1, 2, 3, and 4 were sold to them?

TR: Tanemura Brothers. One through 11, and 68, were sold to Tanemura Brothers. And Lots 5 and 67 on the old map were sold to Tanemura and Antel, with the exception of the immediate area which is the factory. So the 176 acres run down here from old Lot 5, down to the river, across the back of it, and then back up by the railroad tracks. That's the 176 you've got there now.

BO: . . . the 1921 drawing (Site Plan of Factory 1).

TR: Yes, Factory 1, and shows pretty much the way it was in 1951. There wasn't, that I know of, a big change in those 30 years, except maybe for some of this area back in here, the waste pond and river protection.

BO: Could I walk through this map with some questions for you?

TR: Sure.

BO: The reservoir is on the Buena Vista side.

TR: Yes. Do you know where it is?

BO: Is it still there?





TR: No, but you can see it. There are tanks up there, and it was sold to the people that—the company owned 25 acres around here. Well, these 25 acres here, which are defined on the map where it says "factory yard boundary" on the other side of the river, that's in Rancho Buena Vista, the Buena Vista Rancho. But you can see the two tanks up there, if you look across, going down the boulevard, and you'll notice an arroyo that comes from the top of the hill and runs down here, a washed-out arroyo. In 1906 this reservoir, which was a concrete reservoir but unreinforced, broke, and the three million gallons or so of water that was in it, came down and rushed down. You can still see that.

BO: What year was that?

TR: I think 1906.

BO: From the earthquake.

TR: The earthquake, yes.

BO: I also understand the mouth of the Salinas River changed in '06.

TR: Was that when it changed?

BO: That's what Jens Jongens was telling me, was that the quake caused it to shift from above Moss Landing to Mulligan Hill, in a more permanent way. I understand that over the centuries it always has been going back and forth. But this was a pretty permanent change in '06. But then the Monterey natural history book states it's somewhere between '08 and '11, I think. But I will pull out the maps here which will show you (another version). It's very interesting; it's fascinating to read, because that river really changed a lot, and I get that Spreckels had deliberately done this and created dikes down there which would liberate more land for beet growing. That was the Cooper-Molera tracts. I checked that with the Molera papers in the Bancroft Library, and was reading them, and she said that they did do that. It's a real interesting set of papers. Back to this map. The pulp warehouse was out here.

TR: That's still there.

BO: As of recently that's still there. This is where I found the drawing (Building No. 117) 117.

TR: . . . This came across the bridge. This water line came across the bridge.

BO: I have a picture of an old, it looks like a Model T crossing a bridge over the Salinas River. Do you know if this was at one point converted? I can't figure out where that bridge was.

TR: . . . right down there (at Hilltown).

BO: I (found) plans for a major suspension bridge here. It's got cables coming down.

TR: Well, the closest bridge to this one was the old bridge that was just downstream of Hilltown.

BO: That would be called the Hilltown Bridge, then.





TR: I guess it could be, yes.

BO: Where is the Caissons Spur Bridge? A lot of pictures of that.

TR: I don't know. I think there was a beet dump there, and that ought to show on the PVC drawing. The next bridge south of this, and we always talk about anything—if you're going to Los Angeles, you go this way. So this is south. Does it make any difference whether you're going over to Old Stage Road? Actually you're going northeast, not south. But if you're going to San Francisco, no matter how you're getting to San Francisco, that is north. So that Model T probably was on Chualar Bridge, which was just destroyed just a short time ago—a very, very narrow old bridge. And this one was destroyed in 1968, I think, when they built the freeway through there. It's downstream of the existing bridge.

BO: Did Spreckels build that one too?

TR: No, I don't think so.

BO: So the water came in here. It was used for domestic. Did it feed the town of Spreckels?

TR: Yes. It fed the town of Spreckels through this line right here—see where it says "8-inch concrete iron pipe"? That pipe is still there, and see where it says "valve house" right on Spreckels Boulevard? That building is there, right across from the store. They put a shake roof on it. And then that was connected to the town, and this valve was a pressure reducing valve, because that's 213 feet—it gives you 100 psi on the floor. And so they had a pressure reducing valve right here, and we took 60 across here and put 60 on the town. So that's kind of the water system. And the pumps, several of these pumps, pumped into this line, and they just floated on the line, and there was a float in it, and just a visual deal—a big target up there, and when the target got down to a certain point, then it was full, then somebody looked up there and just turned the pump off. It didn't have any radio control or anything of that nature.

BO: What's the name of that pump? Does it have a name to it?

TR: Which ones were the domestic pumps?

BO: Oh, this target pump. Would it be called that—a target? It doesn't have a special name, all that apparatus that you described?

TR: No. Well, these are deep well turbine pumps.

BO: Oh, okay. There's the name I'm looking for.

TR: Deep well turbine pumps, and there's a whole string of them here. See the field pumps right here? Number 8, number 7, 6, and then there's 21 and 22 and 23 that are there now, and these are all gone. But there was a series of pumps back here, a whole series of pumps that were hooked up into this system, and you just simply pushed it into the system.







So if you took water over here, you fired this pump up—the other side of the number 18, that's probably—that's a pump there with a discharge on it. You fire this thing up and you use the water here, and then they stop using water here. The extra water just goes up the hill. So you just float on the line, then you get 100 psi throughout the whole system. That's your domestic system. Now a lot of this then would go into a larger line which came down here into these sumps and these big round circular ponds here, settling ponds. That was wash water and that sort of thing.

BO: That was the waste water?

TR: There's fresh water going into processing water, as opposed to this system, which would be considered to be domestic water. That's what you used for the drinking fountains; that's what you used for the centrifugals, if you need to wash them out.

BO: These pumps were not put in until later. Would it be the teens, the twenties?

TR: The twenties.

BO: So prior to that what did they use for their source? The river water?

TR: Well, there's never been much real riparian use of the Salinas River in modern day, because it simply isn't that dependable. It doesn't run on the surface. It doesn't run, or it doesn't run on the surface, for a good part of the year when you would need it for the factory. So you would expect somebody along the river here to have some river pumps out there, but you don't find those. What you had, for example in this area right here, you had six wells drilled down, then excavated out, and a tunnel went across, and then you had the suctions down each one of those six wells coming up to a manifold, and you had a centrifugal. You put that centrifugal down—where? Fifteen feet of the water, right? And pumped, oh, maybe 2,000-3,000 gallons a minute.

BO: Is that like a friction pump?

TR: No, a centrifugal pump is just what it says; it's got an impeller that looks like this. You turn the impeller, and the water is thrown out to the peripheral, to the circumference of the pump. It comes into the center here, and its velocity is very low. It just comes into the center with low pressure, and then goes out to this point here, and then you've got a pipe here, and so the water then flows this way.

BO: Is that still in use today?

TR: A centrifugal pump? Sure.

BO: And this started about the 1920s?

TR: No, that system started with Archimedes. This system is—do you remember this one? You've got the little man there that's pushing him right there? Well, these pumps were used for—oh gosh, I don't know. I can't tell you when the first what you'd say was a centrifugal pump with a steam engine on it, but that goes back for dewatering mines in Wales, back to the early 1800s. So almost all pumps were centrifugal pumps, and they're sometimes called snails, because they look like this. This is the water in, and this is the water out. They look like this from the side, and now today they would be coupled together and you would buy the unit, but before they had a steam engine, or they might have had any







other kind of device, but mostly steam. And then of course the electric motors came along, and then somebody decided that if I put the motor here, and if I make a long shaft, and if I put a centrifugal pump down at the bottom like this, then I don't have to keep digging my well down here so that I can suck the water up. The water will be in the well, and I'll put the pump below it. So then the atmospheric pressure will press on this, and then I just have to put enough horsepower in it for it to come up. Well, those were the kind of pumps that were used, and then eventually somebody decided to put a column around this side of it instead of running it up a separate pipe.

BO: And that would be a friction pump.

TR: Put the power down—not a friction pump. So what you have, these are really parts of the centrifugal device, and they're called the axial flow pump. And depending on how you devise the vanes, what your situation is—for example, if you have a pump and you want to pump it out of a sump where the storm water flows, well then you would design those vanes for pumping a lot of water against a lower head. If you were sticking the thing down 300 feet, well then you would be more interested not so much in a lot of volume, but something that would give it a high pressure. So the design is infinite.

BO: Would you say that Spreckels' engineers, yourself included, would be designers of any of these, and innovators in their use?

TR: As far as the deep well turbine pump—no, I don't think so. The design of all of those pumps, all goes back from today—if you go buy a Peerless pump, or you buy a Johnston, or a Jacuzzi or whatever, it goes back to about four or five guys. They were the blacksmiths, and they were the.... they were the Hewletts and Packards; they just did things back under a shade tree there, and they designed these things, and they put them together, and you could buy a pump from practically anybody that had a shop to put them together.

BO: If I were to include in the book pumps in a section on irrigation, you would put the centrifugal, you would put the steam driven one, you would put the column one, you would put the windmill. Are those the categories you'd—

TR: Well, yes, but I would say that the windmill is more of a domestic kind of thing, for cattle. The only one really. I think Spreckels had a windmill.

[END OF SIDE B]

[SIDE A, TAPE # 2]

(Continuing a discussion regarding irrigation)

TR: And a cubic foot of water is 7.48 gallons per cubic foot; 8.33 pounds. So if you multiply 7.48 times 43,560, then you get the number of gallons in an acre foot—325,623, or whatever that last three numbers is. All right, 325,000. Over by the ocean, maybe an acre foot and a half would be satisfactory to grow a crop of beets. At King City rainfall is higher, and the humidity really is the answer to it. But if you go to King City, then you're probably going to use four acre feet. So you're talking a million two, a million three—one million three hundred thousand gallons of water per acre. So if you've got a hundred acres, you're talking about a hundred million gallons of water to grow a crop of beets in King City.







BO: And how long would that growing period—

TR: Over a growing period of—well, the growing period would probably be nine months, in those days, if we're talking about the old (inaudible).

BO: Yes, (inaudible) three to six.

TR: Oh no, no, no. No, wouldn't that be wonderful.

BO: I was reading how out of Watsonville they were able to get two crops per year.

TR: Well, they didn't do that in the old days, and they still don't do it. Maybe you could grow two crops in Watsonville, and you can double crop around here, and you can triple crop around here, but you'd better not have sugar beets in the rotation, because it just doesn't—

BO: They won't develop.

TR: You would plant sugar beets here for fall harvest in January, and you would harvest them in September or October. Those would be early beets. If you planted them in February or March, you would probably harvest them in November or early December.

BO: Which is why they had such long campaign seasons here.

TR: Well, the campaign is only going to start when the earliest sugar beet is harvested, and only goes until the last sugar beet. But when you had longer campaigns, how you got into longer campaigns in the very late forties, they carried some beets over, overwintered the beets, because it was a wet year. And they said, "Oh God, it's terrible; we couldn't harvest them, and the farmers left them out there." Well, it was too wet to do anything. They didn't have any choice. They probably would have disked them up. But when the spring came along, these things are all kind of yellow, as they'll get; they turned green and they started growing again. So they said, "Gee, maybe we've got something here." So they started harvesting those beets, and lo and behold, if you get them harvested early enough in the spring, you've got pretty good sugar. So now you have people who are planting in June, and are harvesting the following February, March, and April. But you see, it's still nine months. So then you go to Bakersfield, where instead of planting in January or the late June, you might come back and be planting down there in October, and you might be starting to harvest in June instead of waiting till September.

BO: Were they pulling beets up from Bakersfield to Factory 1?

TR: No, but going back to those days, and even Manteca, that was a relatively new kind of thing. In the olden days, you just simply planted them when you could get them into the ground, and you had a fall harvest, and that was it. But these other period of time that I'm telling you about, those were things that I can remember them doing. I started in '51, and the pile of beets that they piled up—what they would do is in order to get the harvest done they'd pile the beets up. You've seen that; if you go out (inaudible) big pile of beets.

BO: Well, the Watsonville pile was five hundred and some feet long.

TR: That's another way that you extend the harvest, you see. And so you have a rain pile; that's what we used to call it, a rain pile. Well, you start building up a pile as things got







cooler. So with the piling, and the fact that you would get some beets from Watsonville, and you were getting some beets from King City.

BO: And you could keep going.

TR: Those were different periods of time. That would spread it out. But it was a fall campaign. It was never a spring campaign until 1948 or 1949.

BO: I didn't know about the triple cropping, the double cropping.

TR: But when they talk about that, sugar beets are not part of that. I mean, when you talk about double cropping, you're talking about lettuce. You're not talking about broccoli.

BO: I was reading some sugar beet industry something or other, where it's the ideal crop for America to become self-sufficient against the onslaught of foreign sugar domination.

TR: Yes. Well, wouldn't it be wonderful if you would grow two crops of sugar beets in a year? You know, it takes two years to grow sugar cane, and if you could grow two crops of sugar beets, there wouldn't be any sugar cane coming into the country. I think you'll find—you should talk to better experts than me. You could talk to Dr. Shulke next door.

BO: According to everybody, you are the expert on Spreckels, on the history, on the people, on just about everything. A couple quick questions, which maybe you can't answer. If you have time I'd really like to sit down with more drawings with you, because you could fill some blanks. . . . What I would really like some help with would be innovative Spreckels irrigation techniques, methods, inventions. I see original drawings of things involving the railway, in terms of the dumping and the high line dumps and that kind of thing. There are plenty of kind of gear, pulley, connecting (inaudible) irrigation field. As you found out, I don't know a thing about pumps. I believe that Spreckels as a company was really innovative, and I think they probably produced really the top-notch technology of the day to move the water.

TR: I think those batteries, the wells, I've got some stuff that talks about some farmers using that. But it had to be somebody that had a pretty deep pocket to do that. And Spreckels was the only one around that at that point was really even interested in irrigation. So those big irrigation systems, and some of those were pumping into—

BO: What's that say again?

TR: It says, "The first sugar made at Spreckels factory, August 26, 1898, at 3 a.m."

TR: . . . I'd love to see all these things. I found in doing oral histories, what I would do, I'd get a guy like this old guy over here, Andy Shattuck, and he came here in 1919. I'd say, "Andy, I'd like to talk to you some of these days about the old day." ....Oh, I can't remember."

BO: That's always what they do.

TR: I had a picture that was taken in the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, I think it was at the celebration of the completion of 2 Pine Street. And so a whole bunch of people from Spreckels, including people from the volunteer fire department, who were in uniform, went to this thing. They happened to be at the last table, far away from the front.







But the photographer took the picture from the back of the room. So there they were. So you could see all of them. There's hundreds of people in the photograph. You've probably seen it. I made dozens of copies. A lot of people kind of like to look at it. Anyway, Andy started off one day, and he took each one of those people, and he told me little stories about what this guy did in the factory, and all of this. When he left I said, "Andy, I thought you said you didn't remember anything." —"Well, by God, when you showed me that picture, I sure did remember those guys." That's true about those maps too, you know. I probably have looked at all of those maps.

BO: Are these of value?

TR: Not really, although who knows what value there is? I'll tell you something about Ranch 8. Lot 5, Ranch 8 may very well be the ranch where Lenny squeezed the boss's daughter, killed her, in *Of Mice and Men*. I have a theory about it, and I think that the Steinbeck historian agrees with me.

BO: Who's that?

TR: Pauline . . . Pauline Pearson.

BO: In my car I have two letters (copies) written by John Steinbeck, one from the Spreckels Hotel. Are you aware of that one? "Dear Miss Michaelson. . ." And then he discusses his day in the factory as a 12-hour nightmare shift.

TR: No kidding? Where did you find that?

BO: At Stanford.(Green Library, Stanford University )

TR: You know who would really—there was a photograph of Steinbeck taken in front of the factory.

BO: Oh, that would be great to get.

TR: I have seen it. I know it exists, but I've never made any—

BO: The family is in charge of this, and I have to get permission to publish the letter from the family.

TR: It would really be a neat photo to get. I know (inaudible) Steinbeck stuff down there. Have you ever been to Steinbeck's home? There's a group that preserves it, and they run a lunch deal there, and it's all volunteers, mostly what would be comparable to Junior League in Pebble Beach, around Salinas. Wives of grower-shippers and people like that. Any pieces of Steinbeck—they're always looking for.

BO: I want to show you this quickly. This is pretty old, 1901, showing the river mouth here, rather than up here.

TR: Yes, that's Molera and Wohler tract. Moro Cojo was the site of a beet growing station, and it was a site of the wreck, I think, that they described in the Steinbeck railway book. The S.P. track is still there at Moro Cojo station, and the Pajaro Valley intersected with that (inaudible) wreck was. I've been down there and looked up and down there. You can't see anything above ground at the Moro Cojo station.







(Tape Skips)

(Discussion regarding the many unpublished or poorly cited reference materials available on Spreckels.)

BO: So much of what I have is undocumented. I have no citations on it. I have no backup information. So I just print what I have. I have a drawing that says this. I have one that says that. And what I'm doing is hopefully someone will come along, like you, and use whatever I've found as a springboard and take off with it.

TR: On this topic, do you know Sandy Lydon?

BO: I have several calls in to him.

TR: He used to do a tour up and down the Valley, when he was working for the college there. I think he works for a television company now, doesn't he?

BO: Sandy is doing a book on the Japanese. . . . I'd like to talk to you about artifacts that might be available, the possibility of drawings. I'm missing the extraction plant drawings; a lot of the boiler house drawings don't seem to be around.

TR: Is that right? See, if they just happened to be up there in the civil engineering department, which is where this stuff came from, upstairs of the old building. And then when it got knocked down a lot of this stuff was on its way to the dump. We had a guy there, a manager there, who really didn't believe in keeping any of this stuff, so he had a truck; he got his truck and he was hauling this stuff down to the dump. And I found out, and a guy came running up to me that worked with me, and he said, "You know what he's doing." So I said, "Well, you get two trucks, and you get two more guys, (inaudible). You go down there and (inaudible)."

BO: That's why we have these.

TR: That's why you have those. All of that stuff was going to the dump. So I got a bunch of those flat drawers from the factory and saved some out of the building, so we kept them in several different warehouses.

BO: Good for you. I hope there's more.

TR: Now, some of the factory drawings, that may have been down onto the (inaudible), and some of those I didn't recognize. Those were kept down there, but he had, I can't tell you how many different drawers of drawing that he had down there.

Transcribed by Kathleen E. Goss, phone (415) 648-0774

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ORAL HISTORIES:

III. JAMES ROSS RILEY, III

INTRODUCTION:

This interview is one of four interviews regarding Factory 1 in Spreckels, California. The study was sponsored by the Spreckels Sugar Company and the County of Monterey.

The interview takes place in Salinas, California. Much of our discussion takes place over a 1911 map of the Town of Spreckels. The map is available in the drawing section of this study under the Town of Spreckels. Jim supplied the following biographies for this interview.

James Ross Riley III, Biography

I was born in Salinas in 1944. I have been a life-long resident of Spreckels, California. I attended the Spreckels School until entering Washington Jr. High. I graduated from Salinas Union High School in Salinas and attended nearby Hartnell College.

(Jim Riley has been very active in several local and regional organizations. Presently he serves as President of the Spreckels Community Service District, past-Chairman and 20-year member of the Spreckels Volunteer Fire Company, and past-President of the Monterey County Historical Society.)

James Ross Riley Jr., Biography

My father was born in Berkeley, California in 1903. His parents moved to Spreckels, California, in 1903 where he went to the Spreckels School. He attended Salinas High School, then Oregon State University and Stanford University. He became a licensed surveyor and engineer and worked for Monterey County until the early 1930's when he joined the Spreckels Sugar Company. He worked at Factory 1 until his retirement in 1965. He died in 1981.

(James Ross Riley, Jr. served as President of the Monterey County Historical Society and member of the Spreckels School Board. He founded the Spreckels Property Association and then the Spreckels Community Service Area, District #40. In 1935 he married Erma Viola (Blomquist) Hallock of Salinas.)

James Ross Riley I, Biography

My grandfather was born in Scotland in 1862. He came to the northwestern United States in 1880 to design water flues for the logging industry. In the 1890s he was hired by Claus Spreckels to manage one of his sugar plantations, Pau Hau, on the island of Hawaii. He married Mary Scott and in 1898 they had their first child, Elizabeth. Elizabeth resides today near Murphys, California. My grandfather continued to work for Claus Spreckels in San Francisco through 1903 at which time James Ross Riley, Jr. was born. In 1903 the family moved to Spreckels, California where my grandfather worked at Factory 1 as Master Carpenter until his death in 1934. Both of my grandparents were very active in local social affairs.







INTERVIEW WITH JAMES ROSS RILEY III

Interviewed by Bjorn Olson

July 21, 1993

BJORN OLSON: We're here on the 21st of July, 1993, interviewing Jim Riley. He is a former employee, or resident, of Spreckels, California, and I met him earlier today. You were working at the old (truck) scales near the Tare lab on the Factory 1 site. Jim, were you born in Spreckels?

JIM RILEY: I was born in Park Lane Memorial Hospital in Salinas, actually, and came to Spreckels when I was two days old, but I guess everybody was then.

BO: What year?

JR: 1944, June 1.

BO: Your parents were—?

JR: My father came to Spreckels in either late 1903 or very early 1904, nobody's quite sure, but his sister, who is still alive today, and who is 94, almost 95, sharp mind, remembers him coming down on a pillow on the train. So he was very small. And the house that we live in now was not the first house we lived in; we lived in a house further down Railroad Avenue, possibly where Gastelums are now, in 1993. It would have been one of these here.

BO: We're looking at (Lot 18) Block X.

JR: Yes, Block X; it would have been lot number 90, somewhere in there.

BO: 84, you're pointing to, or 86 (actually Block X, Lot 18 at 88 Railroad Avenue).

JR: I'm not quite sure which one. Then, in 1904 they definitely moved into the house that we're in now, 53 Railroad Avenue.

BO: That house, you had mentioned, was moved from Natividad?

JR: No, no; ours was one of the original 17 or 18 houses built in the town. The building that is rumored to have been moved from Natividad is the old library here (13 Hatton Avenue), which was the old newspaper, on the west side of Hatton Avenue, next to the alley, between First and Spreckels Boulevard—number 13.

BO: Lot 11, Block J. And that has a bunch of roses there.

JR: Correct. I planted them.

BO: You planted them. So you live there now?

JR: No, I live here—53 Railroad.





BO: What's your connection then with the old library?

JR: Oh, I own it.

BO: You're still not sure that it's moved from Natividad, though?

JR: Rumor has it that it was, and ironically, at the rodeo this year, I did volunteer work with a family who are moving into one of the oldest houses left in Natividad, and they're very interested in researching it, and they knew about a building that was moved out of Natividad toward Spreckels. So they're going to try and research it from their end.

BO: Good. I have some copies of appraisal records, and I will look tomorrow; I'll look in there. I have found a number of homes that had been moved over the years—from Gilroy they moved a number of them; from Hollister, and then from the right of way of Salinas. I (recently located) those records, they may have the Natividad move.

JR: You know, this is 1911 (refers to 1911 map); so they had most all these houses in the park side of town in 1911.

BO: Most of these along Third over here, I believe they were moved or built here?

JR: These were all built. Everything on this side of town—no, wait. The only houses that were moved in were the little small ones up along here on First Street, Railroad, Second, Third and Fourth; but they're the little tiny shingle frame houses, that either have the little stylized wood sugar beet, or a window in the front gable end.

BO: Which is not really a sugar beet.

JR: Yes, we call it the stylized sugar beet. Tom Ryan coined that one. We didn't know what else to call the thing; that's why we say stylized.

BO: So what you're saying is that most of the houses for Block I on First—

JR: Were moved in. And you notice they sit very close to the sidewalk compared to the other houses, that are 25 feet back. They're 15 feet. Nobody knows why.

BO: Probably that was the nature of the moving. Do you know whether or not the workers tended to have houses that were inferior to management's? Did you notice a discrepancy?

JR: There's a distinct pecking order, and there are three basic styles of houses. The original 17, or so, that were built—(three) on First Street, on the old side of town—the old side is between Hatton and Railroad, that was the first side of town built, and the two-story house that is on First and Hatton, and then there's one on Railroad on the corner here (27 Railroad Avenue), and the one across from its front yard on the railroad tracks.

BO: We're talking about Railroad and Second. OK, that's Block B, Lot 12 (43 Railroad Avenue).

JR: Now that house is exactly the same as this house here, but it was moved around, except it's flip-flopped.





BO: I see.

JR: And this house is the same as these, except the third room was never developed, so they don't have the fancy Victorian roofline on the front; it's just a barn roof.

BO: Oh, I see. Let's see, this is north, so what we're talking about then are three houses that are identical--

JR: No, two; this one, and this one. Absolutely identical, except they're flip-flopped.

BO: And this one is similar (Block B, Lot 1).

JR: This one, this one, this one, this one, this one are all similar (pointing to Block B Lots 1,4,8,9, and 12).

BO: Why is that?

JR: Those were the superintendents' homes.

BO: Who designed them?

JR: Probably Weeks.

BO: You think so?

JR: Yes, because Weeks supposedly designed the houses in the town, and they have Weeks' chicken tracks on them.

BO: They do? I drove by—the one that you're pointing at, which I found interesting, today, it's on Hatton, 37 Hatton Street (Block I, Lot 11).

JR: It's been bastardized.

BO: But it was called the "Club House." It was on the Factory 1 site, and it was moved in 1905 to that site, and what's confusing about it is when you're looking at the *Spreckels Courier* and reading about it, there's two Club Houses.

JR: Yes, this is the Club House here (Block I, Lot 11).

BO: There's another Club House at 70 Third Street. I know that this was built deliberately as additional housing for middle management.

JR: Single men.

BO: Single men; and John Steinbeck, Jr., the writer, lived there.

JR: Oh, I don't know why he would have lived there. He was just a flunky; he was a bench lab chemist at the factory.

BO: He was in charge of supervising 60 people in the chemistry lab.

JR: For how long?





BO: I don't think it was very long.

JR: The reason I say that is because it's amazing how suddenly John Steinbeck has become so efficient and proficient in his death.

BO: Well, the reason I'm saying that is the two letters that he wrote from the Club House, that I pulled from Stanford University. They're in the archives there, and he wrote them from the Club House and signed them. He was in charge of 50 Mexicans and Yaquis Indians from Mexico. He said the food was great, the pay was great, and he was making money to go on his way to Mexico. That was written in 1933.

JR: See, if he was in charge of 50 Mexicans from Mexico, he did not have a very high position there, because anybody with good business sense could be in charge of 50 Mexicans, because they were very, very common laborers.

BO: Yes, and it sounds to me like he ran perhaps the sampling at the Tare Lab without any formal education in chemistry.

JR: He probably worked as a bench chemist in the Tare Lab.

BO: And the Mexicans would be out there, picking the beets out and slicing them and running them through the Tare Lab. That would make sense.

JR: That was a very low level type job. Nowadays it sounds impressive to say that so and so was a bench chemist on the Tare Lab. Housewives in Spreckels were bench chemists on the Tare Lab.

BO: Now, that's very interesting, because the first women to work for Spreckels himself were at the chemistry lab. I have a picture of them I pulled from the Honey Dew News. There were two women there, and it's a common misbelief right now that the first women to work in the factory were during World War II, which is not true.

JR: No, I agree.

BO: What is interesting about John Steinbeck, Jr. was that he is confused with his father, J.E. Steinbeck, who also worked at the factory. He worked in the office, and was friends with Charles Pioda; that's how he got the job.

JR: And then he went on to work for Monterey County.

BO: That's right.

JR: That's where he became established.

BO: Was this house, called Club House Number 2, moved from Factory 1? I believe you're right, that Weeks did design that, and it was on the site, and they moved it out to make room for the baseball diamond, and for experimental beet labs, experimental planting, experimental greenhouses, and that kind of development. Was it still a Club House when it was moved here, or did it convert to a residence?





JR: I think it probably was converted to a residence, and I'm sure it definitely was converted to a residence after the Third Street Club House was built, because as a child I remember it as just a normal house. I mean, it was not per se a Club House; it was just like the house across the street from me on Second and Railroad. It's only been bastardized in the past 20 years on the inside, by making the living room twice as big and taking walls out, and so forth.

BO: In the *Spreckels Courier* they refer to a Cooper House, where Mrs. Cooper took over and was cooking these wonderful meals, and she was such a good cook that people who normally ate at the hotel were now crowding into the Club House, and the Sunday dinners were considered the best in the region, and people were coming from all over.

JR: Let me write some of these things down, and I'll ask my aunt, because in 1910 she was 12 years old. The best thing for me to do someday is to walk you through the town.

BO: That would be great.

JR: William Weeks designed the original part of town, from what I understand. The original houses, the original 17 or so, were the two-story ones on First Street and a few others. Let's count them here. It's been years since I did this research, 25 years. There's one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. Now where would the other five be? It might have been some of these along here.

(In the original part of town, east of Hatton Avenue, there were nine two-story homes; six on Block B, two on Block I and one on Block X.)

BO: Block X.

JR: Now, when I say 17, that's just sitting around as a kid, listening to people talk. But definitely the first ones that were built were these, because Rhyner lived in one of these, and he was (one of) the factory engineers. And then the Juhlers; the Rhyners lived in one, and the Juhlers lived in the other, and they flip-flopped.

BO: The Juhlers, they ran the Emporium?

JR: Correct. And also my grandparents were one of the owners in the Emporium, around 1910, I think. There were six or seven men who bought the Emporium from—theoretically they say Mrs. Spreckels, I don't know how true that is, or the sugar company.

BO: I haven't found any evidence of that to be true.

JR: That's why I emphasize that's hearsay. But it's fact that six or seven, maybe eight men, bought the store. But they all worked 12-hour days, six days a week at the factory, and they just couldn't run it. So finally they sold out to Mr. Juhler, whose wife was from a mercantiling family on the East Coast, previously from Germany, the Krugler family. Her relatives had a very large store back East somewhere. So they became the mercantilers. But back to the houses. I'll call this style Style A. My house here, on the northeast corner of Railroad and Second, you have to eliminate this back part. That's what mine looked like originally—that one, that one, that one, and that one are identical houses; this one is flip-flopped, left to right, so the porch and kitchen window would be on the 2nd Street side.







BO: We're speaking of Block C, Lot 1 and Lot 9, and then Block B, Lot 14 and Lot 17.

JR: That's it. All four are identical, my house is the oddball one. Mine's the one that's flip-flopped; the porch is on the other side. These houses are basically the same as the two-story houses, only they don't have the second floor, and there's a little difference in the dining room area because of where the staircase goes. The bathroom's in the same place. The superintendents got the houses with the bay view window in front, the fancy split roof with the rooms upstairs, and the oval or the big large square window for the foyer.

BO: I see.

JR: Now, the next step down in management were the four houses that I've just mentioned, the ones like mine. They did not have the upstairs, but the downstairs was basically the same (as the original two-story homes), and instead of having a bay window—they were a little lower management—they had a Palladian window, of which I still have the original in storage. And then the next step down were foremen. They had the houses all along Railroad, Second and Third, between Railroad and Hatton Avenues. They had brick foundations with hip roofs.

BO: And that would be Block X.

JR: Uh huh. And there are some of those interspersed around different parts of the town. But they all look the same; they are on brick foundations, and they have, I call them pyramidal roofs. They are exactly the same as the two-story ones and mine, except they have no hallway in the center of them and the rooms are smaller. The rooms interconnect to each other, and they have no upstairs. Some of them had a small front porch and a foyer. Some of them eliminated the foyer and had a large front porch.

BO: They would be original homes.

JR: Original, on the brick foundations. Now, the ones that they moved into town are the smaller ones yet, that are on the wood foundations, and they are the ones that have the fancy little roofs that look like minuscule two-story houses, but they're not. And they were interspersed between them, because originally all the houses in town had an empty lot between them for a vegetable garden—except for the Rhyners, and they had the tennis courts for the town.

BO: Yesterday in the appraisal book, I identified the homes that were moved from the Gilroy area, and you're right; they were moved every other lot, and that would be in Block C. Block D was also populated when they raided the Gilroy area.

JR: And then there were some over here on Fourth Street.

BO: Yes, not from Gilroy.

JR: No, but all those did come from ranches.

BO: I haven't identified where they're from yet. I know that Weeks is credited with having done forty cottages in 1898.

JR: Those would be the ones on the brick foundations on this side of town (south and







southeast). Well, let's count them. There would be 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

BO: The First Street group.

JR: I've been going down Railroad (counts to 37). That's possibly 38, and possibly 39, and possibly 40. That would be it within two houses there. And all those are on the red brick foundations, and most of them have grooved board siding, except the four that are the style that I lived in have shingles.

BO: Oh, I see. Now, the shingles would be middle or lower echelon?

JR: That was upper, but it was lower upper, because you had the hallway that divided the four rooms, you had the entrance foyer, and you had the Palladian window.

BO: Now, upper would be including the bay, and oval window.

JR: Oval, or very multipaned large square.

BO: In the front. And they had a hallway between the rooms?

JR: And they had a hall, and the second story. And very nice looking staircases going up, multi-turn staircases, with beautiful polished tile fireplaces. Now, the ones that are in the other styles all have the exact same fireplace, with tile, mantel, and frontal piece, all coal-burning fireplaces, and all with fleur-de-lis grates in front to keep the coal from coming out, with dumping coal baskets. And they are efficient fireplaces; I use mine to this day—well, until the earthquake of '89 when I lost my chimney.

BO: I see. And the others were wood-burning, then?

JR: No, they were all coal except for the post-1910 houses on Second, Third and Fourth (facing the park) which had wood-burning fireplaces. But you could burn wood in them very efficiently, because people have for generations.

BO: The other workers, did they also have coal?

JR: All the houses on brick foundations had coal fireplaces, and they all had double chimneys, because the back side was the coal-burning stove in the kitchen. So all the chimneys are identical in them. The houses that were moved in from the ranches, they had half chimneys that came down and stopped at the ceiling, and they were brick from the ceiling up and then the stovepipe—well, they came down about two feet below the ceiling, and the stovepipe went into that.

BO: That must have looked very interesting after the earthquake.

JR: They survived quite well. The internal chimneys survived quite well; the top parts all flung off or cracked at the roof line.

BO: It's interesting when one reads about the manager's house being the only two-story house in town.

JR: No; totally false.





BO: It's completely false.

JR: And you also read in different renditions that they built the one-story brick building for the store, and as the town grew and they needed a place for a dance hall, they added a second floor. Well, that's not true. They built it as a two-story building; you can just tell by its external appearance.

BO: I have an interview tomorrow with the owners of the store now.

JR: Oh, Margot and Jack. They have a tremendous amount of knowledge. Margot has a great amount of knowledge on it.

BO: Her aunt, I guess, grew up in the town.

JR: She was Etta Juhler, who I always thought of as my grandmother. No relation, but emotionally our families were very close, and Margot and I are like sister and brother.

BO: Do you know anything about St. Joseph's Church?

JR: I understand it was moved. About the same time some of the small houses were moved here—it came from the Alisal district according to Mike Guttierrez. (Mr. Guttierrez is a life-long resident here and member of St. Joseph's congregation.) It was torn down in the mid-1960s.

[Looking at picture]

JR: OK, the house is on Second Street. The houses that face the park—my grandfather was in charge of building those.

BO: And his name was?

JR: James Ross Riley. I'm number three; we're all the same. He went by Jim R. Riley; my father went by J. Ross, and I go by Jim, James, or Ross. My grandmother in the worst way wanted to move over to the park, because she was an immigrant from Scotland, and in Europe when you live across from the promenade park, you have arrived, you've made it. And it was a beautiful new section to live in, a nice little park. But my grandfather absolutely refused to move from this house on the corner of Railroad and Second. Now, thinking back, nowadays we hear the word Railroad and think, kind of, "Oh, how wine-and-cheese romantic." I remember as a kid living on Railroad with the steam trains. It was not romantic. It was hell. It was smoggy, it was noisy. You couldn't hang your wash out because it would come back sooty. If you were a kid, the last thing you ever did was run your fingers down somebody's white sheets because it left black marks from the soot from the trains that went 24 hours a day, banging the cars. So, moving from there to the park would have been wonderful for my grandmother, it would have been incredible, because that would have been upwind from the trains. The reason I talk so much about this is to emphasize the point that my grandfather made. He refused to move into one of these houses along the park because he said they were of inferior construction, and he was not going to live in an inferior-built house because the house on Railroad Avenue was built so superior to these over here that he wasn't going to leave it.







BO: The house on Railroad, now, we believe to be a Weeks design, and it has a brick foundation.

JR: Correct—which has survived the '06 and the '89 earthquakes flawlessly.

BO: And which we will look at when we walk around the town. Now, the houses on Third, across from the park, also have brick foundations.

JR: No, they're on concrete. They're all built on concrete, and the beams underneath them are split beams. They don't go the full width of the house. They go to pier blocks in the center and are bolted together, and then they go the rest. All the old houses on the old side of town all have up to 28-foot-long, 12- to 13-inch, two-inch-wide full beams going the full width of the house, uncut. And the grain, you can follow it and it doesn't vary; it's heart cut redwood.

BO: The beams are? Not Douglas fir?

JR: No. The houses are solid redwood. And in most of them (those first built with brick foundations), the underpinnings of the house, from the floor level down, were done with square nails, and from the floor level up were done with round nails. Not all, but most; they were in the transition stage then.

BO: How interesting. Did you learn that from your grandfather?

JR: No, my grandparents were dead a decade before I was born.

BO: What profession did you fall into as you grew up? Did you go to Spreckels School?

JR: Yes, I went to Spreckels School, and I went to Washington Junior High for the ninth grade, and Salinas High, and then Hartnell College, where I studied engineering, drafting, sociology, and all kinds of things.

BO: Did you go to the William Weeks-designed school at Spreckels, the red schoolhouse?

JR: No, that was gone; that was torn down. I think 1937 was the last class in it.

BO: Then you went to—

JR: The modern new school.

BO: Somewhat art nouveau, or WPA, a bit. It's got a little bit of both.

JR: Yes, and it's beautifully painted now. It was always painted one color, but a few years ago they emphasized the scrollwork. I went to the one-room kindergarten; I'm proud of that.

BO: Where was that?

JR: That was back where the bus sheds are now.





BO: And where are they?

JR: On Railroad Avenue, Railroad and Fourth.

BO: Up here; I see. The school now is on the corner of Fourth and Hatton, and that's somewhat across from the Memorial District Building. There's something I saw in the Memorial District building which I enjoyed very much, and those are the murals.

JR: Those are great.

BO: Can you tell me a bit about them?

JR: John Robie painted them, probably 25 years ago.

BO: Who is John Robie?

JR: He's a local artist; he still lives in Salinas. He doesn't paint any more because of his eyesight. He was hired to paint those, and he has a feeling toward history. They're quite good, except for a few minor little details. When you view the town from the factory, the windows are not quite right on the ends of the houses in the attics. But those are minute, so the man did an excellent, excellent job.

BO: Actually, they're very good. The foreshortening when looking at the factory is deceptive, because the land between Spreckels Boulevard and the factory is so much greater than he shows. But you have to do that or you would lose the detail.

JR: And of course the row of trees is considerably shortened, the Riverside, or Hilltown community, whatever you want to call it, is a mile away.

BO: Yes, he shortened that quite a bit. But now I have a question, because there is a lot of mystery about the age-old tourist attraction—*East of Eden* and the Spreckels depot. On one side of the wall we have the wood-frame building related to the railway tracks, the narrow-gauge rail.

JR: That was the PVCR warehouse.

BO: That was the warehouse. And then on the other side of the Memorial banquet room, we have the brick depot.

JR: OK, the brick depot—the warehouse was right there, at Spreckels Boulevard and the railroad tracks.

BO: They're calling this a depot in this drawing.

JR: Well, it's a form of a depot, I guess; but the little brick one was over here on the other side of the street.

BO: The brick one is the one that appears in *East of Eden*.

JR: Right.

BO: When I watched the movie, it certainly looked like it.





Addendum:

(Jim's aunt recalled that the Spreckels Depot was the wooden structure on the north side of Spreckels Boulevard. It was not used as a depot. One would purchase their tickets on the train. She recalled that the building provided housing for immigrant Hindustani labor employed on Ranch 1. The brick building on the south side of Spreckels Boulevard was used as a scale house for the beets. It is that building which appeared in *East of Eden*.)

JR: Yes. Then there was an old train car that sat here in my youth for years, and it turned out it was one of the rare train cars in the United States, because it turned out to be a silk transportation train car—incredible walls in it.

BO: Broad gauge?

JR: Narrow. They took it away about 15, or 20 years ago, and I'm not sure if it's at the Sacramento Rail Museum or not, but it's at some museum. I have a feeling it's at the Smithsonian.

BO: Oh really? Is it the passenger car?

JR: No, it's not the passenger car of the Salinas Valley Railroad that's in the Sacramento museum; I know that one. It's a boxcar, and it was specially designed to carry silk, and it was used as an old oil terminal for years and years. Some train buffs went through Spreckels and went, "Oh, my God, look at that car!"

BO: On that spur track is where the engine sat for some time after they decommissioned the narrow gauge. That was 1925.

JR: Yes, and the water tank was over here.

BO: Yes, and the windmill, on the other side of Spreckels Boulevard. So your belief, then, is that this is not the depot, which is the wood-frame, wood-siding building.

JR: Well, it was a freight depot. And it's built like a depot; it had the overhanging roofs and the stairs—well, there are the stairs, right there.

BO: Is that the one in *East of Eden*?

JR: I don't know. I was never allowed to see *East of Eden*. My parents went all through school with John Steinbeck. They had no use for him. My father went to Stanford with him. He had no use for him there. My grandparents were very, very close friends of Ernest Steinbeck and his wife, and I've heard people who knew my grandparents comment often about how they were so embarrassed for Mr. and Mrs. Steinbeck because of what they had to put up with with their son. In fact, in the Masonic Temple in Salinas, in the entries—sign in as walk in the lodge—in 1904, 05, 06, and on up, there's Ernest Steinbeck and Jim R. Riley signed together, so they would sit together. The Steinbecks used to come out to our house.

BO: And Pauline Pearson probably tried to talk with her as well and got nowhere. I've heard this, and I've heard it many places—that he was not welcome.







JR: He wasn't a nice person. He was rude and crude, and he just wasn't a nice person to have around proper society. Just like today we have people that we don't really care to invite to our home when we have company. He delighted in insulting people. And keep in mind, in the 1910s and teens, this was quite a proper Victorian place. And Salinas was a very proper town. The Salinas Opera House in the 1870s, 1880s, 1890s—if you were a world-famous opera star and you did the West Coast and you didn't sing at the Opera House in Salinas, you had not done the circuit. It was quite upscale here.

BO: I noticed, for instance, William Randolph Hearst owned a parcel of land that Claus Spreckels bought when he bought up Ranch 1. I noticed a number of other names from San Francisco society that had bought land here, lived here, and still do.

JR: Well, Brandenburg Coffee, that's part of the Rosenberg family in San Ardo.

BO: Can you tell me a bit about Alisal Park?

JR: Well, they had a quarry out there, but they also had picnic grounds, and that's where the train would chug out on nice warm days and take as many people as wanted to from town, and they'd have great picnics. Then they would come back singing all the way, and the kids would fall asleep. They put park benches on the flatbed cars.

BO: Were you part of that?

JR: No, no; this ended in the twenties.

BO: Do you know anything about the "Bracero" program?

JR: No, but I could introduce you to some of the people that were part of it and are still alive—the Camposes and the Guitierrez's.

BO: Guitierrez—that's Mike?

JR: Yes. He and his wife both started out, I think, in Little Tijuana. ("Little Tia Juana" was a company town partially built adjacent to the town of Spreckels.)

BO: It's my understanding that Spreckels started the Bracero program—was likely responsible for it, and for the legislation that allowed that to occur. And given the expansion of the company in 1918 through 1921, I would guess that would be true. There's map after map of Mexican corridors. And if I look at this map now, and the floor plan, and the park, and the plumbing, and the electricity, the fact that it's tongue and groove siding, board and batten—

JR: These (foreign) houses are amazingly similar to these (white) houses.

BO: With bathhouses, with latrines, with private bathrooms. And I'm looking at good housing for most people today, and I'm noticing that the appraisers come into these, and they're saying they're in very good shape still. And they haven't been lived in for—

JR: Well, the interesting thing about the houses in Spreckels—for 1897 or 1898, to design and build a town, every house had an indoor flush toilet in it. The smaller houses on the brick foundations had a toilet closet built within the house but entered from the outside porch. The next step up was the house like mine. There's four like mine, and they're, like I







said, the same as the two-story ones, because they had large closets in each bedroom. I mean, they're the type that you can walk into the middle and look to the left and right—not very far, but you can. And all the molding for the floor went in through the closets and around. The door handles and the faceplates were on both sides of the closet door. They had a marble washstand in the hallway, a toilet and a bathtub in the bathing room. This was pretty upscale for a worker.

BO: And that was just your worker level.

JR: And the whole town was on a sewer system. There's never been a septic tank in the town of Spreckels.

BO: When did they put flush toilets in? When did flush toilets start?

JR: In 1897, when they built the houses. With the sewer system; the whole thing was built as one, and it's the same sewer system that works today. And they were electrified when they were built, although the electricity didn't come till about 1910, because originally they were going to run the whole town on DC, and DC is like water going through a pipe. If everybody turns their water on at the same time, nobody gets anything. So they scratched that idea, and they kept the oil lamps until electricity came out from Salinas as AC.

BO: 1910.

JR: Do you know it was 1910?

BO: No, I don't.

JR: I've heard it was about 1910.

BO: I know that there was discussion in the 1908 *Courier* of electricity—electric lights, and the new lamps had been put in here and there. Claus Spreckels used electric lighting in all of the mills he did in Hawaii. All four or five mills were electrically lit, and he supplied the street lights in Maui as well, plus the electric trolley line. I know in 1898 he had electricity at Factory 1, and telephone system, elevators, you name it. I know he had that in Aptos.

JR: Well, the telephone line that came out from Salinas, there was something—I forget how many lines were on it, but I know our family was one of the lines. As late as 1948, and maybe later, I know that my father had to pay a maintenance fee to support the poles that carried a special line that we happened to be attached to. I remember as a little kid, sometimes when a pole would go down in a windstorm, Dad had to go out and help take care of it. So I think the reason that we had a phone in our house was because my grandfather was head carpenter. Of course nowadays that same position would be like architectural engineer.

BO: He was head carpenter for the factory as well?

JR: For everything, for the factory, the towns, whatever. That was why he was in charge of building the houses around the park.

BO: Was he in charge of building the factory?







JR: No, because he didn't come there until 1903 or '04.

BO: Do you have any hunch who the architect or the designer of the factory might have been?

JR: Well, Rhyner was one of the engineers; I know that.

BO: He was a draftsman.

JR: A draftsman.

BO: He was kind of young.

JR: But he was important. He was important enough to get one of the biggest houses in town.

BO: In 1898. And Charles Pioda was important.

JR: Uh huh. Very important.

BO: It's my hunch that Charles Pioda may have designed the factory. I know that he laid out, did the survey of the grounds, I believe, although I can't prove it.

JR: Well, Weeks did institutional buildings. He did courthouses, city halls, hospitals, and I've always had a suspicion that Pioda might have designed the factory, but I think that he and Weeks probably sat down many times and talked—maybe not officially, maybe just as friends. Because Weeks was the cat's whisker in Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Monterey County, in that era—Salinas High School, Salinas City Hall, Gilroy City Hall, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. So he was the big boy on the big buildings, and it would only seem logical that Pioda would probably consult with him about ground and foundations and soil, I would think. Weeks was a very quiet person, and he loved his work; he wasn't into society at all, and anytime anybody had a unique job, he would rush to it. He lived for his work. So I can't imagine that he didn't somehow visit the world's largest sugar refinery. And it's interesting that on top of many of the buildings in Spreckels, the little circle with the four little tabs coming out of it is very similar to the oval windows in the two-story houses on First Street.

BO: Now, that would be the gable ends of Building 1, Boiler House, Building 3, I believe. The other part that's interesting on the factory are the two ends where the roof comes and meets.

JR: Where it dimples.

BO: I forget what I called that in the report. It terminates the quoin at the top, and I had to look hard to find a name for it. That seems like Weeks. But what's not like Weeks about this is the repetitive nature of every single building—identical bays, identical windows.

JR: You mean of the factory.

BO: Yes. Identical ornament around the windows, where the office building that he designed at the same time is very different, and it's very detailed and quite a bit different in







the exterior. And the factory almost looks like, well, maybe Weeks did perhaps that top and entablature, but then left the rest.

JR: And the structure was done by somebody else.

BO: Because I believe that actually a man named Moore had more to do with the design of the factory.

JR: Huh. Was it C.W. Moore?

BO: No, Andrew Moore was the son, and it was Joseph Moore, the father. (Joseph Moore, formerly of Vulcan Iron & Locomotive Works later formed Risdon Iron & Locomotive Works in San Francisco.)

JR: Because I've seen the name Moore before; yes. (C.W. Moore was a Spreckels manager.)

BO: Associated with Factory 1?

JR: Yes. I don't know how or why, but the name Moore is—

BO: Well, Joseph Moore did design a great deal of machinery. Moore designed four sugar mills for Spreckels in Hawaii, and he and Herman Schussler did all of the designs for Spreckels Bridge. They did all of the irrigation systems. They designed the pumps, they designed a lot of the equipment inside the factory, and they designed the boilers. (Joseph Moore invented a machine for cutting loaf sugar into cubes for Claus Spreckels in 1863) You'll read that Claus Spreckels or W.C. Waters went back East to check on a design.

JR: Waters was Spreckels' head—

BO: Right, head superintendent at the Watsonville plant. And you'll read about how they went to check on these designs, and elsewhere you'll read that it was from Claus Spreckels' designs that they were building these things in New York that were shipped out then on the Oceanic Steamship Company, which Claus Spreckels owned, to Moss Landing, and then brought to the factory. Well, Moore designed all of these, up there at Risdon Ironworks, and Risdon was involved also in the building and the structure of the California Sugar Refinery, or the Western Sugar Refinery, later known as Sea Island Refinery. Moore was involved intimately with Claus Spreckels for 35 years until Claus died, and was in Hawaii; he designed everything. That's why I think, well, this was built right then, and I don't think Claus changed. When he established a friendship he stuck with it.

JR: Yes. Now, the main office in the front has many trademarks of Weeks in it.

BO: Well, that is Weeks.

JR: He definitely did that?

BO: I have the drawings with his name on them.

JR: OK, well, then that would make sense.





BO: The other puzzle to this is that Weeks signed his name on every drawing that he did, and I have a collection of Weeks's work on the ranches, which correlates with what he did. Well, rumor has it that Weeks designed the hotel, but he didn't; it was Charles Pioda.

JR: Oh, Pioda designed it, huh?

BO: As far as I can tell from what I've seen. Pioda designed Annex 1; I'm positive of that. Whether he designed the First Hotel, I need to doublecheck. I'm hesitant, because Pioda had an awful lot to do with the designs of buildings. I think there was so much work to do that it was almost a toss-up. Weeks did a beautiful job on the office building. The drawings are beautiful; the interior, the detailing, is beautiful. I found the specifications for it this morning. It has marble sinks.

JR: I remember the Main Office. I used to go in there all the time. I was fascinated by it.

BO: Describe it to me.

JR: It had oak interiors. The colonnades, the pillars on the stairs, had leaf carvings at the base of them. It was about this color oak, maybe a bit darker. Everything was oak. It had marble or tile floors. The entrance hall was all in little tiles, with Spreckels Sugar Company—in the outside foyer, the steps. And it had marble steps too, if I remember correctly. And the Post Office originally was on I think the right-hand side of it, I'm not sure.

BO: The original Post Office.

JR: The original Post Office. Very short-lived, and then it moved to the back of the store.

BO: It moved to the back of the Emporium store.

JR: The Emporium store, yes.

BO: And then it moved next door.

JR: Correct, when Etta Juhler built the building that it's in now, which Margot owns.

BO: I see. And the current Post Office now is still next door.

JR: Yes, that's the one that was built by Etta. She also built the house for the postmaster, too.

BO: Which house is that?

JR: Uh . . . that one.

BO: OK, that's at Railroad and First, on the southwest side next to the alley.

JR: Then she built the house for the person that ran the gas station. The gas station was built for Tubby, which was Etta's baby brother, 'Tubby' Juhler. (Elwood was his given name.) His wife Elizabeth is still alive. She lives on San Benacio Canyon Road.





BO: That's at Spreckels and Hatton that the gas station was?

JR: Correct. Tubby had a hard time succeeding in farming, doing anything. So Etta thought, well, she'd build a gas station for him. He tried farming, but she built a gas station for him, and he ran it, and then when he stopped running it, Bill Kraul started to run it. So she built a house for him here, and he just died about a month ago. (The house was built on the southwest corner of First and Hatton next to the library with a small house in the back for Etta's friend.) Too bad you didn't get a chance to talk with him, because he was a wealth of information.

BO: I want to get back to the main office. When you walked in, the tiles had Spreckels—what did it say? SSCO, or Spreckels Sugar Company?

JR: No, when you walked up on the front porch, it just had—you know those little tiles you see in restrooms, those little six-side white tiles? If I remember correctly, it had that with Spreckels Sugar written in it. That might have been a later addition; I don't know if it was original. But I think it had marble steps, or polished granite, one of the two. I was fascinated by it. I know it had foot wipes on the bottom—you know, mud scrapers.

BO: Aha. Well, his house in San Francisco had his initials embossed on all of the plates for the doorknobs, and then the doorknobs themselves. It sounded very nice. Then you came in through the front entry, and they had wainscot—

JR: Yes, all around all the rooms, there's wainscoting. I don't remember what the ceilings were like, and the lights of course—see, the building was very bastardized, probably in the fifties. That's when fluorescent lighting was coming in, and they were outgrowing the building terribly.

BO: Well, the specifications have marble lavatories, nickel-plated fixtures. They have cast iron sinks, marble sinks. It's called Building 38; let's see if I can find the rest. It was rather remarkable, all the specifications. No, I haven't got that. What was it? Two stories? Three stories?

JR: Two full stories, with a non-inhabitable attic.

BO: And it had also a vault in the basement. Then it had two scales on either side.

JR: Correct. And it had wrought iron archways between the pillars, filigree, and in the 1960s when the old Highway 101 was not the freeway going through Morgan Hill and all that, when it went through the actual main streets of the towns, by Coyote there was an old junk shop that still had those arches, and where they went from there I don't know. I wanted to buy them but my parents said no.

BO: This was the 1960s?

JR: Uh huh.

BO: It was demolished in 1963.

JR: Uh huh.

BO: Do you remember that?







JR: Yes, but it happened very quickly.

BO: Was it a daytime or a nighttime job?

JR: It just kind of happened over a couple of days. They just came in and they just knocked the tar out of it very fast with a ball.

BO: Did they save anything from the interior?

JR: I don't know if they did or not. My father was president of the Monterey County Historical Society in about that era, and I know my father had just about had it with frustration with Spreckels, because he always wanted to save one of the steam engines. No soap; it went to the scrapyard—locomotive train steam engines. Then he wanted to save a couple of the cars; no soap. But some of those cars that were saved eventually ended up in Roaring Camp Big Trees Railroad. Those are the flatbed cars you ride on in Felton. I turned them on to those, and they went down and talked with I think Tom Ryan, and a couple of other people, and eventually purchased them. My father wanted them to save the steam engine inside the factory, one of the big ones, and put it in the park, because there's just not that many steam engines around. The diameter of the flywheel was about 25 feet, approximately. But no soap.

[END OF SIDE 1; BEGIN SIDE 2]

BO: We're at Side 2, with Jim Riley, picking up the conversation about the steam engine—which was at the beet end of Factory 1?

JR: Yes. Well, it wasn't in the main building, it was in the building next to the main, between the storeroom—I think the Steffens Building, they called it—the lime kiln. It was at the end of that building, I'm pretty sure.

BO: Was it run by the boilers?

JR: Yes, and that steam engine ran a tremendous amount of equipment on that end of the factory, plus the shaft went through and ran all the machine shop. I remember that as a kid, with all the moving pulleys up above and the leather straps coming down to all the different drill presses.

BO: They were called Russell engines, I believe. Do you know anything about that?

JR: No, I know the two big ones they had at the south end were absolutely enormous. It had about a 125 mm stroke on it, and the piston was approximately two feet in diameter. I do know that it turned over 60 to 70 rpm. (They started out with three slide valve Russell engines. They eventually ended up with four 150 rpm engines in the center of the main floor. These drove the DC generators.)

BO: How do you know that?

JR: Because records turned over at 78. Sixty-seven to 78 rpm was its operating range.

BO: Did you ever know Austin Armer.







JR: I knew the name; my father knew him.

BO: He's a really interesting engineer. He designed a lot of things in that factory.

JR: Merton Elliott's available tomorrow; he'll be in Spreckels all day tomorrow, starting work on the new addition to his house. Tape him, because he's just a wealth of information. I don't think there's anybody left alive that probably knows that factory over as many years as he does.

BO: Back to the main office. The specifications I found today—they're not really the specifications; they are the appraisal record of it, but they've got just an elaborate list of materials, with doors, with transoms.

JR: Yes, I remember the transoms.

BO: Natural finish, wainscoting.

JR: I remember the windows had the opaque feather design glass that you can't see through—lots of that in the office.

BO: Colored mortar for the brick. Different kinds of brick, different colors. We have marble floors; we have ceramic tile floors, wood floors. An extraordinarily well detailed building. In 1963, was American Sugar a part owner, 50% owner?

JR: Tom Ryan is the expert on that. I know just enough about the ownership transfers to know to keep my mouth shut. But I do know that there was some jockeying around at that time. But American Sugar, I think, always was 50% owner of Spreckels Sugar, because Claus Spreckels never owned it outright himself.

BO: Well, they owned it with him until 1911, the Riker hearings, and the antitrust breakup of American. Then J.D. Spreckels & Sons came in to pick up where they left off.

JR: Where American left off?

BO: Yes. Then at that point you had the beginning of the decline of the sugar industry in the Valley, because of the beet blight. For a while they thought they had it licked and there was great expansion. You had World War I, price supports, and greater need for sugar. The beet blight nevertheless was taking its toll, and profits were not as good. When American picked up after that I don't know. It's interesting that they left and then they came back. All the transferring title, I'm just not sure how that worked.

JR: Have you talked with Tom about that? He's taken an interest and is researching out the Spreckels family. The only remnant of the family left is one—is it the Ainsworths, or the Ainscrofts? See, my second cousins are half brother and sisters to Spreckels, but nothing has ever been discussed, because it was one of the multi Spreckels marriages. Very few people know that. The San Francisco Spreckels family led a pretty zingy life. The San Diego Spreckels family were more the promenade family type; they had the ship and the Hotel Coronado and the electric works and the trolley works, and basically San Diego.

BO: I am interested in Claus Spreckels; I find him to be much like J.P. Morgan, and I find him to be rather benevolent and rather far-sighted, and interested in the long-term investment in a future of the people besides himself and his immediate family.







JR: He treated immigrants very well. He himself was an immigrant, and he knew what poverty was. I'm not saying that he lived in poverty when he came here, but he certainly knew how he had to work to survive. Yes, he treated all people from ethnic backgrounds with equal respect. That was the beautiful thing that I enjoyed about growing up in Spreckels. I think this is why I can get along so well with any kind of people today—I grew up listening to Danish, German, Portuguese, Irish-Scottish twangs.

BO: All in your town.

JR: All in my town. And I was very, very surprised, as I got older, to find out that everybody didn't have people from all over the world as neighbors.

BO: And the population of the town is—

JR: Five hundred and sixty-three.

BO: Right now; at that time it may have been—

JR: Probably 563.

BO: I'm curious about the Danes. When did they start arriving?

JR: Oh, in the early 1900s the Schlyters came. Leo Schlyter just passed away seven months ago. They lived in the same house since 1914, 15, or 16, across the street from us. See, I've had neighbors that have been there for generations, and it's very earth-rattling for me right now to suddenly have all these people that I've known for over 40 years starting to die off.

The Schlyters came there, and the Andersens, the Ulricksens, Chris Christensen, and the Ulricksens still live next door to us. My mother's family was a Blomquist, and they still farm up and down the Salinas Valley, and they married into the Silacci, Pura, Sgheiza and Twisselmann families.

BO: No Hindus in your town?

JR: No; no Eastern religion people. Quite a few Filipinos in later years. Many Portuguese, and they came—

BO: Pioda was Portuguese, was he not?

JR: Yes, probably. But they came from the Hawaiian Islands with Spreckels, because there are many Portuguese in the Hawaiian Islands.

BO: With the Japanese.

JR: Yes, but the Japanese never lived in town. There was one Japanese family that lived out in Harris Lane. I can't remember their name right now, an old family, I'll think of it eventually. But the Kitajis; they were more in the forties and fifties, but a highly respected family. In fact most all their kids went on to get doctorates.

BO: There were Japanese homes built on Factory 1 site.





JR: When you say Factory 1 site, do you mean the factory site?

BO: Yes on the factory site, on Ranch 1, across by the growing areas. That would be, as I understand, roughly where the Riverside Hotel is, in that area.

JR: Oh yes, there was a very heavy Oriental community down there before the factory was built. We used to go down there and dig up opium bottles when we were kids—the little tiny finger-sized opium bottles.

BO: Was it called Hilltown?

JR: Hilltown; we called it Riverside.

BO: Which is—was that Four Corners as well?

JR: Yes; four because the four ranchos—De La Buena Vista, and Buena Vista, and Nacional, and Toro—they all meet there.

BO: I didn't realize that there were a lot of Orientals there. I know the Chinese were on this side; I know that he had Japanese working right up next to the factory, and I just found out today that there was Hindu camp on the other side of the Spreckels Bridge, a very large one.

JR: I didn't know anything about that. What era?

BO: This would be 1913 and 1920. I have maps of it, and I found it in the appraisal record. So I'm curious if they came in the store.

JR: 1910, 1913?

BO: 1913 through 1920 is the records that I have.

JR: I've never heard anything about that, ever.

BO: Now, they had to shop somewhere, and they were paid somehow, so I'm sure they must have come in. There are so many Hindus that are now merchants; I'm wondering whether or not they worked in the store at some point. I know they wouldn't become butchers. Now, the park was not put in until 1908; 1907 they started it, and it was designated then. They hadn't built—the town really came up to Hatton Avenue at that point. Do you remember the layout of the park?

JR: Oh, very well.

BO: What was it like?

JR: It was in the shape of an X.

BO: You mean it had walkways coming in from the four corners?

JR: The four corners, and they were gravel, DG, decomposed granite gravel. A couple of them had a curve to them, but in the center they had a hedge, about a 4, 5, 6-foot hedge





around it, and they had a fish pond.

BO: It says Aquarium.

JR: OK, they had a fish pond there. I know; I used to get thrown into it a lot.

BO: Was it deep?

JR: No; so-so. It had a wire fence around it, which that probably is there.

BO: And it was wide enough that you could flop around in it?

JR: Oh, probably 12 feet wide. It had goldfish in it, and lily pads. And we all knew that if we even touched one of those goldfish we were dead meat.

BO: Who took care of the goldfish?

JR: Well, Mr. Anderson took care of the park very heavily in the thirties and the forties. By the time I came along it was Bill Braga.

BO: Mr. Anderson, what did he do?

JR: He took care of the park, purely. And mowed the manager's lawn and so forth.

BO: Was he hired from outside the company to come stay and live there?

JR: No, he was probably an employee of the company.

BO: How was the town government structured?

JR: There was none.

BO: It was through the company.

JR: Yes. The first town government was created by five people, my father being one of them, and that was in the sixties. That—'62, '63, '64—is when they put the concrete curbs and gutters and sidewalks in. And they formed the Spreckels Service District Number 40.

BO: That means that the employees paid for their sidewalk, or the company paid for that?

JR: There was privately owned land in town then. Mert Elliot, who you'll talk to tomorrow, my father, the Juhlers, and—

BO: Those were privately held pieces of property.

JR: Yes. I would say that between the Juhlers and the Elliots, Bowdens, Campos and my parents, they probably owned 40% of the privately owned land in town.

BO: And they put it in?





JR: No. Well, the people who owned the private land paid their portion, and the sugar factory paid their portion. It was per linear foot. If I remember correctly, it was \$1,600 or \$1,800 for a corner lot, and \$1,200 for an inside lot. That included the storm drain, the resurfacing of all the streets, and the curbs and gutters and sidewalks. And you could pay it off in 14 years.

BO: Why the sudden jump into concrete?

JR: Because people did not know how to take care of dirt sidewalks. You'll talk to some people that say, "Oh, Spreckels never had sidewalks till the sixties." We did have sidewalks; we had dirt sidewalks, and there was a distinct line between the trees and the property line of about 6-7 feet. It's interesting; where people owned their own houses, they had good drainage, because they kept their sidewalks and drains up. And there were actually gutter drains; there were dirt gutter drains, in the shape of the street, and it came up the sidewalk. But when people rented—especially in the sixties you had the advent of multi-car families; we never had that up through the fifties, but then in the sixties, suddenly each house had three cars, instead of every other house having one car, and it became very in vogue to put your car in your front lawn and wash it. In order to do that you had to drive over the dirt sidewalk, and what happens when you do that? The tires take dirt away every time you drive off, because they're wet. So the sidewalks got lower and lower and lower, and the gutters got broken down; the lawns got lower because of the wet cars sitting on them. So then it rained. Now, what's the very first thing people are going to do when they get a mud puddle on the sidewalk? They're going to run and grab a shovel and put dirt in it. What happens the first time the car runs through the dirt?

BO: I understand. Was there gravel underneath this dirt sidewalk?

JR: Yes. So instead of replacing the sidewalks with DG, or spall, as we used to call it, ground up lime rock from the factory, they would put dirt in it. And eventually, some of the homes, when it rained in the winter, their front lawns were literally under a foot of water.

BO: When they laid out the town, did they lay it out and then bring in the lime rock ground up, and put that down, and then put the dirt over it? Or did you walk on lime rock? Do you know?

JR: When the town was originally laid out, they would grind up the lime rock, and those were the sidewalks.

BO: It would be pretty finely ground.

JR: Like DG.

BO: It was probably the pond waste lime.

JR: No, that would be powder. No, this was just ground up rock.

BO: So we're looking at 75 years of a good ground rock.

JR: Oh, the base on Hatton Avenue, when they dug up Hatton Avenue to put the new road in, there was over a foot of chunks of granite and rock like this, just packed in there. In fact they left a good portion of it for the base of the new road, because the engineers said, oh, I couldn't disturb that.







BO: Why would anyone? That's too bad. Those are great roads and sidewalks.

JR: But when they put the new sidewalks and curbs and gutters in the town, they reversed the whole drainage system, and this is why when you go to the house today right here, you'll find their back yard is two feet higher than the sidewalk.

BO: We're talking about this house, on the corner of First and Hatton. So that's two feet higher than the sidewalk? Because of 1963.

JR: Yes. They totally changed the whole drainage of the town.

BO: So the drainage used to come toward Factory 1, or away from Factory 1?

JR: Toward. Now it goes to here.

BO: Over toward the west end of Spreckels Park.

JR: Actually the pumping station is right there.

BO: OK, that's at Llano and Second.

JR: The dead end of Second. So anyway, the town government, Service Area 40 serviced the sidewalks, the street lights and the storm drains. It had nothing to do with sanitary sewer; that's always been Spreckels Sugar. Well, time and motion went on, and the organization that was started originally was known as Spreckels Property Owners (Organization). Then as soon as that was formed, my father and somebody else from the board thought that's not fair, because Spreckels Sugar's a part of it, so it became the Spreckels Resident Association, and the board was made up of three property owners, three renters, and one representative from Spreckels Sugar.

BO: What year?

JR: This was in the sixties. That went along great until the early seventies, when it became very hard to find three property owners and three renters that wanted to serve on the board—so they finally just changed all that and called it the Association of Spreckels Residents, the ASR. They essentially were the same as the Service Area 40 board—well, they were; not essentially, they were. But then it came time that we realized Salinas could just come in and take us over at any time, and we also wanted to become a tax base district, and we wanted to do a few other things, so eight years ago or so my father and Elmer Mattart and a couple others formed the Spreckels Community Service District.

BO: Which is what it's called now.

JR: Which it is now; and that superseded the old Service Area 40. Then the Association of Spreckels Residents became just kind of an ad hoc committee that cleans park benches and puts Christmas decorations up and things like that. And we became the Community Service District, and we have just taken on fire protection powers last year, and I just got elected president of it tonight.

BO: At the town meeting.







JR: Yes.

BO: Do you remember the walnut trees?

JR: Um hm.

BO: As I understand, they are protected as a registered landmark.

JR: Yes, they are. I was on the history commission for Monterey County, and I was at the meeting with Tom Ryan and Michael Cling when all that was decided. The way Michael Cling, who is the attorney for Tanimura, had the whole thing worded was they would protect the trees for their lifetime. I was chairing the commission that day, because I was vice president and the president wasn't there, and I talked the board into not accepting that resolution, and talked the board into accepting the resolution that they would maintain the trees for their lifetime and the trees in perpetuity, because the way it was set up as soon as a tree croaked, that was the end of the tree.

BO: Why would anyone not want to have those trees there?

JR: Because they kill about 50 to 60 feet of farmland, because the sun can't get to the crops.

BO: And that farmland is worth how much?

JR: Oh, probably \$18,000 an acre. But you get three full crops out of it, remember. Salinas Valley is one of the few places in the world where you get a guaranteed three full crops a year out of your land.

BO: That interests me, in relation to Factory 1 and its production of beets. When you read the literature, it's confusing that they say the factory never closed down.

JR: It did; it closed down for a couple of years during the dry spell.

BO: Yes, which was what year?

JR: Oh gosh, when was it, 1921, 1920? It was somewhere in that era. It was just after World War I, and I know it almost bankrupted the company.

BO: That's the era we were talking about, right after that time of expansion.

JR: My grandparents, during the Depression, just at the beginning of the Depression, which was 1929, maybe it was 1928—my grandparents took a six-month tour of Europe. So obviously the factory had to have been closed. Of course in those days they only made sugar for two months out the year anyway, or three months.

BO: Yes, that's why I'm curious. If we have a three-season production in Salinas Valley, why wouldn't the factory constantly be receiving beets?

JR: Oh, that's just for lettuce and broccoli and cauliflower and so forth. But it takes the sugar beet about nine months to mature.

JR: They were also bringing beets in from the other valley too. When I was a kid they







would have a spring campaign and fall campaign. Campaign means when they make sugar. But then when I was late elementary school age, they started spring campaigns, and then they had a lull of about two months in the middle. So that's when they must have been doing the double crop thing. I think the big problem they have with sugar beets is when a sugar beet reaches maturity. The beautiful thing about a sugar beet is it can stay in the ground for weeks and weeks and nothing happens negatively. But then if you take it out of the ground, or if it stays in after a certain point, then it starts losing sugar. Once you take it out of the ground you have to process it preferably two days, three at the latest; otherwise it goes bad.

BO: So it makes storage of beets a big problem.

JR: So once the beets started coming in, they just came in in droves.

BO: Do you remember the high line, and how that worked?

JR: Oh yes, uh huh. The train used to chug right on to it.

BO: The train would bring them in, and it would come up an elevated ramp—

JR: To the end of that big concrete abutment that's still there.

BO: So it would come weaving around by your house, and rattle you to the timbers, and then it would turn into the site, and bring it in to the beet bins; now our train is coming in the beet bins, which are in a north-south—well, they're parallel to the river at that point.

JR: And the Boulevard.

BO: And parallel to Spreckels, OK. So they're high at the end, low at the beginning.

JR: No, the ramp is low, but the beet line itself, that was all timber, concrete and timber, is all level.

BO: So now what did the trains do when they came in?

JR: They were bottom dump trains, bottom dump hoppers, and they would just put them up there, and underneath—the tracks would be right here, and then they had a ramp that went down that way, and at the bottom there was a water ditch on either side, about so wide and quite deep, and they'd open up the bottom of the cars, and with a tremendous roar the beets would just roar down.

BO: How many cars did they have?

JR: Oh gosh, on that line you could probably get twenty.

BO: These are broad gauge we're talking about, then.

JR: Yes. In my era they were.

BO: There were five sheds. Was one outside?

JR: A couple, one or two outside.







BO: Why were they different?

JR: I don't know; they probably had sheds over them originally. Maybe they caught on fire and never rebuilt. I know there were fires in the roofs of them at different times, I remember that.

BO: I've seen pictures of some of them having been burned. It's something that's difficult to unravel with the drawings and photographs. The photographs are from a distance, and you either see a pile of beets or you see empty sheds, but not in between. When they came in, you'd hear this roar of the beets dropping, way back in your house.

JR: Oh, we didn't hear that much noise. See, it's hard to ask me how much noise we heard, because we grew up with it. The noises I remember at my house were the incredible hissing and the shrillness of the steam, the screaming sound of the steam. The low roar of the factory running, its massive, heavy tonnage equipment rubbing against each other, that roar roar roar, that was constant.

BO: You could hear that in town?

JR: Yes, all the time, 24 hours a day. But it was the steam that made you really sit up in bed. Sometimes they would blow the steam from the boilers, and it was just like it was blowing up next to you. And we would run out and look at it, because it was beautiful; the whole sky would just turn pure white and go up maybe 700 or 800 feet into the sky.

BO: This was from the boiler house?

JR: Uh huh.

BO: And it was a white cloud?

JR: Uh huh.

BO: This was all day and night?

JR: Yes.

BO: For two months.

JR: Well, as I got older, in the later years it was nine months out of the year.

BO: The San Joaquin Valley at this point was probably feeding it as well.

JR: But it was noisy. I'm on the sound committee now, to keep T&A noise down, and I realize Spreckels has turned into a residential community, and it's quiet and it's peaceful, and it's nice. I enjoy it, because we always enjoyed the few months the factory wasn't running.

BO: Very quiet today.

JR: And we want to keep it that way. But I also remember—and I tell myself not to be a hypocrite, because I remember when the sound was so bad and the steam was so bad





that you couldn't hear anybody talk across the street. But the steam engines are also what I remember, the constant, all night long, ssssst, ssssst.

BO: It's curious he ran the trains through the town. I mean, of all the land that he owned, the tracks were established, and then the town.

JR: Yes, I never could figure that out. But at least he put the town on the upwind side of the tracks.

BO: Was the smell tremendous?

JR: And the soot in the early days of wood, coal and oil. I understand wood was only used for a very short time if, at all, in the beginning..

BO: When the beets came in, did they have a particular smell?

JR: Yes. Now, the smell that I love, and most people who've spent their life in the town love, is when they would burn the sugar. Ah, it's just a beautiful sweet smell, molasses.

BO: Why would they burn it.

JR: Somebody boo-booed, somebody screwed up. They did it on purpose to please me, maybe.

BO: Then if they didn't burn it, what was that smell like?

JR: It depends on what area you're talking about. If you talk about the ponds they worked on the sewage, but when I was a kid it smelled pretty rank. It smelled like a beet sugar factory, not pleasant.

BO: I've never smelled it before.

JR: Well, you know what a cattle feed lot smells like when it's wet? Similar.

BO: That's similar to the intersection of I-5 at Manteca.

JR: Yes, exactly. They run cattle there too.

BO: Well, that's the thing. It is a confusing smell, but actually I like it very much.

JR: It's a homey, musty smell.

BO: It's musty, and it's like musk. You've got beet pulp being fed to cattle—very clean, very well maintained cattleyard, I've noticed. So it's not the manure smell, but it's unique.

JR: It is; it's unique to a beet factory. And you can travel the whole world, and you can smell a beet factory from miles away. Now, the trains, what I remember about them, living on Railroad Avenue—see, you have to be careful who you talk to, because depending on where they lived in the town they'll tell you different things. The people who lived on the park side of town will tell you, oh, we never heard any train noises. Well, naturally; they







were upwind from it. Just like the people over there say, well, I don't know why you're complaining about T&A, we don't hear them. Well sure, you don't hear them.

BO: Now, Tanemura & Antle. What do they do?

JR: It's a lettuce packing company.

BO: So it's just a noise problem.

JR: It's a low rumble.

BO: When the factory was running, they had waste ponds in the back for the beet pulp waste and the juice waste and the lime waste. I know that they did a lot of reclamation of the lime, but did you go running down and swim in the river?

JR: No. We used to go down there; yes, we had our swimming holes, and our forts. Because the river then was a real river. It ran most of the year round—not as a big river, as a trickling river, but nonetheless it ran. A good portion of the year there were tadpoles, jillions of tadpoles, in that river. And trees, massive growth of forest of trees, which are all gone now. So all the kids had their forts in there.

BO: Why are all the trees gone?

JR: No water. They all croaked.

BO: Because the water's just been sucked out?

JR: Yes, and also the farmers keep pushing and pushing and pushing the farmland out right to the edge of the river, so they've cut the trees down. And Spreckels cut a lot of the trees down because of fires, and transients were living in there and things like that.

BO: And they used wood also in the steam-driven engines.

JR: Well, no, I'm talking more about the fifties and sixties. But no, they had large forests, with oak trees. I remember as a kid oak trees down the river. But see, the river flushed itself out every year when it rained. Then in 1958 when they put the dam in, we didn't have the floods. So the river overgrew and overgrew and overgrew, so when the river finally did flood, it just went out.

BO: Did you experience flood at all?

JR: Oh yes.

BO: Did the water come into town?

JR: No. Spreckels is an average of 15 feet higher than Salinas. Spreckels is on a very high knoll. You ride a bicycle from downtown Salinas up to Spreckels, and you'll appreciate how much of a knoll we're on.

BO: So you think that may be one of the reasons he chose that as a site?





JR: Oh, I'm sure it is. I think he chose that site because, number 1, it was already established as the Hatton dairy, so obviously the Hattons chose it for a reason. It's high.

BO: Why did the Hattons sell?

JR: I don't have any idea. The Hatton family was kind of getting out of the dairy business in those days. They were big in Carmel Valley, but I imagine if some big boy from the city comes down with lots of money, he'll sell.

BO: It was quite a bit of money. And then the other tract of land was the Cowell Ranch. What was going on on the Cowell Ranch at that time?

JR: At Santa Cruz?

BO: No, the one here.

JR: Oh, I don't know about that one.

BO: Well, the Hatton tract is on the west side of Railroad Avenue, the west side of the tracks actually. And on the east side of the tracks is the Cowell Ranch. He originally bought the easement for the railway through here, then he bought the Hatton tract, then he bought the Cowell Ranch. That's why the tracks are here, and they swing in toward the Hatton tract, and the beet sheds themselves—the sheds are 800 feet long—they start on the property line between the Cowell Ranch and the Hatton Tract. And all of the buildings of the factory are all settled, so that in case later they wanted to sell off the Cowell Ranch, or there was a problem, all of the buildings fell on one side or the other.

JR: Well, that makes sense.

BO: That's quite clear in the property, and I was curious whether there was something going on with the Cowell Ranch that led to that decision.

JR: I don't know. I always wondered why he came out here, and the tracks go one way and the road crosses the other. There's no logic in that at all.

BO: Well, I need to take that back. The right of way actually was down Hatton Avenue, for the railway.

JR: Well, that would make sense, the way it's laid out.

BO: That's what I mean. And then the beet sheds start in line with Hatton Avenue, where Hatton Avenue then is your dividing. But then he got the Cowell tract, it appears, and he ran the railway around—

JR: So that's why the railroad would switch over.

BO: And jog.

JR: OK, because they both go like this.

BO: So then the railway comes over, brings the beets around into the sheds, because they get a gradual loop, and it gives a service area for the railway and the loop where he





had bought the Corey Ranch across the way for the reservoir. Now I read somewhere again that the reason the bridge was built was not so much to get to the other side—

JR: No, to carry the water pipes.

BO: Yes, but you don't need a big bridge for that. It was to carry the crane to lift the pump onto the pier in the middle of the river. And the derrick was like a ten-ton derrick from the narrow gauge.

JR: To lift what to the river?

BO: The pump, the steam-driven pump. It was the first water developed for the site, and it was a pump that sat on the central pier of the Spreckels Bridge. So there's one story, which is that the bridge was built to carry the crane; they dropped it in there.

JR: But the bridge also supported the railroad that went down to Agenda.

BO: But that was later, when that branch was built. He hadn't acquired that property at all, but he had acquired the reservoir site, and that seemed to be integral with the purchase of Ranch 1. It was Hatton, the Cowell tracts, plus the reservoir site uphill, which gave you your domestic water until the bridge went out in 1972, is that right? It's an interesting story; you don't know which one is true. The reservoir is quite tremendous, and that still supplies the town of Spreckels, doesn't it?

JR: No, the reservoir is gone.

BO: They have tanks up there.

JR: They have tanks, but that's for Las Palmas. Spreckels is supplied by two diesel pumps and pressurized water systems—one next to the fire company, and one on the west end of the main office.

BO: But now, what does your sewer do?

JR: It goes down to a tertiary pond, where it gets churned up, and then just kind of goes out into a pond and disappears.

BO: Settling pond. And that's on the Factory 1 site.

JR: Correct.

BO: Which the sugar company owns now. Is the town prepared to buy that?

JR: That's one of the main reasons, if not the main reason, that we created a Community Service District. Because the workers wanted to buy their houses from the factory in the early eighties. The factory was dragging its feet—I've heard because they were trying to find a good financing company, but I don't know why. But some of the hot-headed people in the town that wanted to buy their houses right now caused a lot of commotion. I could never figure out why they wanted to buy their houses, and I said to them at public meetings, "Why do you want to buy your house? Hey, you're renting it for \$47 a month. Put the payment in the bank." But anyway, they raised so much commotion that Spreckels Sugar finally said, "OK, OK, we'll sell you the houses when you form a Community Service District







to take over the sewer." And they were going to give us 70, 80, 90 acres; you hear different stories. I was on the board at the time, and I'll tell you, you hear different stories; nobody quite agrees exactly, but they were going to give us acreage. And Guy Manuel was present, and so he promised us all kinds of things. Excuse me, not Manuel; Manuel came down, and he was a good guy. The attorney, what was his name? A slick guy from New York.

BO: Bob Schmaltz.

JR: Bob Schmaltz . . . and he came down one night, after a couple years of us dealing with them, and the houses were finally sold, so we wanted to know when we were going to get the deed and the right of way to the sewers. He came down at a meeting with Guy Manuel, who was retired President, and Guy was a person's person, a heck of a nice guy; he started out sweeping floors at the plant there when he went to Salinas Junior College, and he ended up as President. So he sat there at the meeting and Schmaltz just came out and said, "Well, I don't recall ever saying that we would deed you the land." And I said, "Why do you think we formed the whole district? You don't think we formed a district just because we wanted to!" See, we formed the district faster than they thought we would; in fact, we were so efficient in forming it the County kept saying, "Slow down, slow down; we can't keep up with you!" So finally Schmaltz denied, and I said, "Are you calling us liars?" He said, "Well, I didn't say that." I said, "Well, we are." It got into a gentleman's vocal fisticuff. So finally Guy Manuel stood up and said, "Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. It's getting to the point we're getting non-gentlemanly." And he looked at Schmaltz and he said, "Bob, I rode down here with you. I don't know if I'm going to be riding back up with you. I hate to tell you this in front of these people, but you told these people that you'd give them so many acres." He said, "I was there. I heard it." And he said, "I've known these people all my life down here. I've worked with these people. These people aren't going to lie; they remember. They're not dumb."

BO: And did they come through?

JR: Well, no. They took over the whole sewer system and continued it, but they haven't charged us a penny. So after 95 years we still have an absolutely free sewer.

BO: What are you going to do now that they're leaving?

JR: We don't know; nobody knows. We have the right to take over the sewer in our Community Service District rights. We also have the right to buy the water company. We don't particularly want to buy the water company, because it's an antiquated, drip and leak water company. And we don't have the facilities to run a water company with the Community Service District board. We don't know what we're going to do with the sewer. We've been to treatment plants, and they have different types. The reason we wanted the 70 acres was so we could aerate the water through a sprinkling system on a non-humanized crop, and then we could sell the hay to help offset the cost of the system. So nobody knows where it's going to go.

BO: Did they give you the 70 acres?

JR: No. They sold it to Tanemura.

BO: After they promised that they would?







JR: Right. But you'll never find any record of these meetings, because all these records mysteriously disappeared.

BO: When did they disappear?

JR: Oh, we have our records for the Community Service District. Those haven't disappeared. But the Spreckels records, I don't think they disappeared; I think Schmaltz just says, "Oh, we never said that."

BO: I understand that the company—I'm not clear, but it's an employee-owned, ESAP, company. But I'm unclear about how the structure of the ownership is, and whether American is still involved; I believe they were as Amstar.

JR: Yes. What I understand is when Amstar broke up, the Spreckels Sugar Division board of directors and some others bought out Spreckels Sugar from Amstar, and they created Spreckels Industries. I think there are 12 divisions, like Spreckels Land Company, Spreckels Shipping Company, Spreckels Sugar Company, Spreckels Water Company, Spreckels Distribution Company, Spreckels Ag Seed Research Company, Spreckels Seed Sales Company. And then there's four or five more.

BO: And the sugar division is pretty much here; then what I'm curious about is how many people in the town have a share in the company.

JR: Oh, I don't think anybody in the town of Spreckels. I don't think there's any stock like that out. I would be very surprised if there were any common workers that had any stock.

BO: So the sewer, when they depart the site is the problem.

JR: It is going to be a problem, and the water company is going to be a problem. But T&A I understand has first right of refusal on the water company. In fact I asked Liza Robison (General Attorney and Vice-President for the Spreckels Sugar Company) point blank, does T&A have first right of refusal? And she said, "Well, we do have some contractual agreements with them." So as far as I'm concerned that meant yes.

BO: We're looking at the insurance map that I brought, and Jim thinks it's 1940s.

JR: Oh, I know for sure it's 1940s, because there's Smith's house that Etta built for the postmaster; I think she built that in '37. And my parents built their rentals down here in '39, '40, '41.

BO: That's Llano and Spreckels.

JR: Llano and Spreckels Boulevard. And Rudkins house there. So this is definitely early forties.

BO: The school is there.

JR: The school was '37.

BO: Memorial Building is not there.

JR: No, that was '56, I think. And the quonsets aren't there either.





BO: The quonsets were part of World War II?

JR: Yes. So this would be built prior to that, and after '40.

BO: The quonsets were taken out when?

JR: Late fifties, because they went down to Arroyo Seco, and Miller Rosendale bought 11 of them and took them to Miller's Lodge, so there are 11 of them down there now, the originals. A couple of them went out to the Crazy Horse Canyon area on Highway 101.

BO: They're pretty elaborate inside.

JR: Yes, for a quonset.

BO: It's interesting, they laid out this site at Llano Avenue, and only built the manager—well, no, we have some buildings here, and we have some new buildings here, on Spreckels Boulevard.

JR: And the trees are all going still down there.

BO: Were they here originally?

JR: Early on they were on this side, but—well, I do recall some of them on that side there, but I don't ever recall them along here. I think all of this is artist's fantasy here. They went along here; this is a row of gum trees here. They were there up until the sixties.

BO: That was for a windbreak.

JR: Yes, that was a hell of a windbreak. And these trees are still there.

BO: And a windbreak here. Why did they take that down? Do you know?

JR: Oh, just maintenance.

BO: Yes, they're a dirty little tree. But you need windbreaks.

JR: And a big enormous one was right here.

BO: I was reading that around 1908 they planted somewhere in the neighborhood of 10,000 gum trees (eucalyptus) throughout the valley.

JR: Who's they?

BO: Spreckels Sugar Company.

JR: For windbreaks.

BO: Yes. There are windbreaks laterally placed across all the ranches, I noticed in many of the plans.





Transcribed by Kathleen E. Goss, phone (415) 648-0774  
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## ORAL HISTORIES:

### IV. JACK AND MARGOT ABELOE; MERTON ELLIOTT

#### INTRODUCTION:

This interview is one of four interviews regarding Factory 1 in Spreckels, California. The study was sponsored by the Spreckels Sugar Company and the County of Monterey.

The interview takes place in the Emporium Store located at the corner of Spreckels Boulevard and Hatton Avenue. The interview takes place at the soda fountain between myself, Jack Abeloe and Margot Abeloe. Merton Elliot joins the group later. The following histories were supplied by the interviewees:

#### **The Emporium Store**

The store was built by Claus Spreckels in 1899 and operated by Ford and Sanborn, a retail chain based in Salinas and Watsonville, until 1905 when they relocated. The store remained vacant until 1907 when Mr. A. Vollmer took over operations. The Bank of Spreckels operated in the rear of the building from 1907 until 1912. Mr. A. Vollmer transferred the lease to The Spreckels Emporium Company on September 3, 1909. The stockholders were employees of the Spreckels Sugar Company. Mr. Jes M. Juhler was one of the original stockholders. He bought out the remaining stockholders on December 28, 1912. Mr. Juhler and family have operated the store as the Spreckels Emporium since then.

#### **Jes Madsen Juhler Biography**

Jes M. Juhler, born in Denmark on March 5, 1853, came to America in 1871. He worked in San Francisco where he met Anna Wilhelmina Kugeler from Brooklyn, New York, who was visiting relatives in San Francisco. She was of German descent and her parents owned a large store in Brooklyn. They were married in 1880 and lived in San Francisco where their five children were born: Jessie, Henrietta, Elwood, Alma and Alfred. Jes Juhler worked for Claus Spreckels in the Watsonville factory. He moved to Spreckels to work in the new factory in 1898 as a machinist. Jes Juhler died in 1941.

#### **Jack A. Abeloe Biography**

"My grandparents left Denmark for California in the 1870s because both of my grandfathers did not wish to serve in the German army. My parents were born in California. My twin brother (James P. Abeloe) and I were born in Salinas on the Russell Road Ranch in June of 1921. (They grew beets for the Spreckels Sugar Company.) We moved to the Spreckels area in 1932. I graduated from the Red School House in 1935, Salinas High School in 1939, Salinas Junior College in 1941 and the University of California, Berkeley in February of 1943. I was appointed an Officer of the United States Navy in July 1943 and served in the South Pacific until discharged as a Full Lieutenant in 1946. I lived in Salinas managing a sporting goods store until 1957, when I joined my brother helping on our ranches. I retired in 1978 and married Margot. We have lived in Spreckels since then. By a previous marriage I had







two sons—Jack, the older of the two, died of cancer in 1971 and Bruce is an architect in Medford, Oregon."

Mrs. Margot (Scholler) Abeloe Biography

"I was born in Kiel, Germany in 1929. Our family moved to Preetz, Germany in 1936 where I went to school during World War II. I learned to become a seamstress from 1944 to 1947 and worked until December of 1959 as a seamstress. In January, 1960 I came to California to be with my relatives, the Juhler family, in Spreckels. I went to Spreckels Grammar School and went to night school in Salinas to learn English until 1962. I enrolled at Hartnell College in 1962 and graduated in 1964. In 1965 my aunt, Etta Juhler, passed away and I inherited the Spreckels Emporium, which I have operated since then. In 1979 I married Jack Andrew Abeloe and we live in Spreckels where we operate the store together."

Merton Elliot Biography

Merton Elliott, a resident of Spreckels since 1929, served as an electrician at Factory 1 for 45 years.





INTERVIEW WITH JACK AND MARGOT ABELOE AND MERTON ELLIOTT  
at  
THE EMPORIUM STORE IN SPRECKELS, CA  
Interviewed by Bjorn Olson  
July 22, 1993

BJORN OLSON: I'm here at the Emporium Store in Spreckels, California on July 22, 1993 with Jack and Margot Abeloe. They are the owners of the store. Tell me a little bit about how you got to become the proprietors of this store.

MARGOT ABELOE: Well, I came here in 1960 to be with my aunt, and she owned the store at that time. When she passed away in '65, I inherited it.

BO: And you've been here since then. When was the store built?

MA: In 1898. Ford & Sanborn leased it. It still belonged to Mrs. Spreckels (not substantiated). Claus Spreckels built it for his wife.

BO: Ford and Sanborn, are they local?

MA: I hear they owned several stores in this valley here.

JACK ABELOE: They were centrally located from Watsonville. That's why they came over here.

BO: From Watsonville?

MA: And they ran it for I guess a year, or a short period of time anyway, and then Mr. Vollmer took over the lease from Spreckels. He couldn't make a day of it obviously, so they closed the store for about a year, and then the people from the factory got together and they each had stock. They bought so many shares in the store, and then they had somebody to run it. By about 1912, I guess, my great-uncle bought out the stockholders one by one.

BO: What years were these?

MA: This was about 1911 or 1912.

BO: And so he gradually bought them out, and then he became the sole proprietor. And his name was—

MA: Jes Madsen Juhler.

BO: And he was an employee of Spreckels?

MA: At the sugar factory, yes; he was a machinist.

BO: So he ran the store in his spare time?





MA: His family did—he had three daughters and one son, and two of the daughters ran the store, and the son was doing the outside, delivering from King City all the way up to Gilroy. They delivered to the farmers, and they got paid once a year when the harvest was in. So they kept everybody on a book, big ledgers.

BO: He owned it from approximately 1912 through—

MA: Until he passed away in—before the war was over; it must be about '49, I think.

BO: At that time, when he took over, it was a department store?

MA: Yes, this was a department store. It had dry goods on one side, and shoes. And then it had farm equipment. You could buy shovels and rakes and hoes and barbed wire. They had a service station in front of the store; we had to pump. And then we had white gasoline for the lights; at that time we used that. And coal.

BO: Did he sell liquor?

MA: Yes, we did have a liquor license. At Spreckels, we had two bars in town. One was the Louvre, and the other one, I don't remember the name.

BO: The Louvre, which is now the firehouse. Here's the picture. The room itself is approximately 80 feet wide.

JA: This building is 40 feet wide, and it's 120 feet, including the wood addition in the back.

MA: About 100 foot, I would say, and 20 foot is that lean-to on the back.

BO: And so the store was divided?

MA: ... where the metal pillars are (divided front to rear in the center). And the other door was open. We got two doors; one for the dry goods. Then we had kind of a whatnot in the middle, for the division; we had little gadgets in there.

BO: Was this a large steel beam?

MA: Oh yes.

BO: And then you had cast iron columns down the center. There was a dividing wall.

MA: Yes.

BO: And the dividing wall had shelves on it?

MA: No, the shelves were on the side of the wall, and there were some tables.

BO: I see. And you would enter in on—

MA: Both sides, either one.





BO: One to buy your farm equipment, and the other to buy your dry goods.

MA: No, not necessarily. You just walked in. And then there was a butcher shop.

BO: And the butcher shop was where?

MA: For a while it was over here, on the right-hand side when you come in the second entrance, and later on it was on the side entrance over there, just on this side of the division.

BO: More toward the back of the store.

MA: Yes.

BO: Where that wall is back here, the butcher shop would be on the far rear?

MA: No, the butcher shop would be on this side of the partition. On the other side we had the post office, the Spreckels Post Office and Spreckels Bank.

BO: Both were the same?

MA: Yes, the bank was actually an office with a safe, and when the men got paid they came to cash their checks. The first post office was in the factory main office, and then the second one was over here.

BO: It's awfully convenient to have a bank inside your store. How long did that last?

MA: It lasted only until the early teens.

BO: Was your family involved in the bank?

MA: I don't think so.

JA: No, no, it wasn't.

MA: They had checks at the bank. We actually didn't own the bank, no. That was when it was the Emporium Company; I guess it was for convenience for the men.

BO: Is any of the equipment here from back then, that you have?

MA: We've got a vault.

BO: When did the soda fountain come in?

MA: The soda fountain came in quite a bit later, in the thirties, I guess. And it was twice this size; we've got the other half in the back. It was a lunch counter as well. The people came up to have lunch. The schoolkids would come to get soup and sandwiches and milk shakes and things like that.

BO: Tell me, were you born in Spreckels?

MA: No, I was born in Germany. I'm German.





BO: Where in Germany?

MA: In Kiel, on the Baltic Sea.

BO: How long were you there before you came here?

MA: Thirty years.

BO: You came here in what year?

MA: In January, 1960.

BO: Tell me about when you came here, and where you lived.

MA: I came to be with my aunt, and they lived on First Street, and I still do.

BO: Tell me about the house.

MA: Well, we have an old two-story house. When I first came I had the rooms upstairs.

BO: Above the store?

MA: No, in the house. The store has one apartment up above. First it was used for storage for clothing when people came to dances, and the kitchen for having food and preparing things, and then later on they converted it to an apartment. There are about two rooms and a kitchen and bathroom, and a little parlor.

BO: The dance hall was next door.

MA: No, the dance hall was up above here.

BO: Is there not a dance hall, or some large hall, next door?

MA: The Fire Department has a hall where you can dance. And then they have a Memorial Building; they have a hall. We don't use ours anymore because we have to have an emergency exit, and that means we have to use one of the windows for an exit, a drop-down ladder or something like that, and we don't think it would be that convenient, actually. It would be the back window or so—not quite what we like to have.

JA: There's only one window on the side, one window in the back, a couple windows on this side. Then there's windows all the way around the front. If we're going to keep this as a historic building, it's got to stay the same as it was before. If it's going to be used for anything, it's got to stay that way. We're not going to change it.

MA: It is still an empty hall, and it has a little stage on the far end.

BO: Tell me about this picture. We're looking at an old photo, and it looks like the dry goods section of the store.

MA: Yes, you can see the pillars here.





BO: I see, and a partition of shelves.

MA: Yes, as you come in from the boulevard side.

BO: These are beautiful display cases.

MA: We've still got these cases. We've got one over there, and they've got some back there, in the store.

BO: They were glass, over wood panels?

MA: It was generally wood, and then they had kind of plastic covers.

BO: And the shelves are still here?

MA: Yes and no; some of them we kept, some of them we took out.

BO: Did you have electric lighting back in this picture? Is that what I'm seeing?

JA: Claus Spreckels originally wired every building for electricity, but only when Coast Counties, which was succeeded by PG&E, came in, we had electricity brought into the town of Spreckels. They used gas, illuminating gas. You see the fixtures on top here, and that's what that is.

BO: Nevertheless it was still wired.

JA: Oh yes, still wired. And the wires were direct current, so these wires can carry just about any amount of electricity you want to carry.

BO: When did electricity arrive?

JA: That I can't tell you. I do not know.

MA: This picture here is this side. You can see the post office in the back.

BO: So you would come in the front door from Spreckels Boulevard, and walk through the dry goods.

MA: Towards the back, yes.

BO: So the postmaster worked back there. Did the postmaster at the time also work in the store?

MA: Well, yes. My aunt was the postmaster from 1913 to—well, until we got another government. It used to be a government appointee, and you had to be a Republican or a Democrat, so whatever party is in, you were in or out.

JA: When Roosevelt became President—





MA: My aunt was out. I think the Youngs took over at the Post Office. Then later on my aunt built the Post Office next door to the store. It's on the same lot. That was in the forties.

BO: What was her first name?

MA: Henrietta.

BO: Henrietta Juhler.

MA: That's right.

BO: Did she become postmaster again?

MA: No.

BO: So it was a one-time deal during the Hoover administration.

MA: Yes, that's right.

JA: Yes, Coolidge and Hoover.

BO: You weren't here during the Depression. Were you here, Jack?

JA: I came here in 1932. My father leased a ranch from Spreckels, that just adjoined Spreckels on the west side. My brother and I came here when I was in the fifth grade, and we went to the old red wooden schoolhouse, graduated from that school.

BO: Tell me about that.

JA: It was an interesting school, because you'd have combined classes in the same room. The teacher would teach fifth and sixth grades, and the principal taught the seventh and eighth grades. It was done quite well. I came from the town of Salinas where you had a separate room for each class, and a separate teacher for each class. But we had some dedicated teachers at that time; in fact Mrs. Lang I think will always be remembered, because she was an excellent teacher, and she believed in fundamentals, and you knew fundamentals.

BO: I've read about Mrs. Lang in the *Spreckels Courier*. You're right; she is very well known.

JA: Yes, she is really respected by everyone. We're fortunate enough to have her old school desk. When they tore down the red building and put up the new school, some of the things were put out for sale, and so Etta bought her desk, and she used it in the Post Office. And then when the Post Office became— What happened was the Post Office got taken out from the spoils system. And so at that time she took the desk back, and we still have the desk, because the Post Office supplied all the equipment inside. It used to be— prior to this we talked about the Post Office in the back, but I was here in 1932, and at that time the Post Office was actually separated from the store. You had a separate entrance into the Post Office.

BO: That would be on the north side.





JA: Yes, on the Hatton Avenue side.

BO: Your father, you mentioned, leased land from Spreckels.

JA: That's correct.

BO: What was his name?

JA: His name was James—he had two initials, P.S. Abeloe. When he came, this town of Spreckels was entirely different in some respects, because we had eucalyptus trees that extended down to the ranch that we leased, that provided a wind break for the town. They also had eucalyptus trees that went from the old office down to the main part of the mill.

BO: The factory site.

JA: And then there was also eucalyptus that went all the way down Hatton, all the way down to the city limits of Salinas.

BO: Were there eucalyptus out in front of the store?

JA: No, pepper trees. I have photographs here that I'll show you later, that show the pepper trees. We also have an old photograph that shows the only building from the town of Spreckels—this was the hotel, that was built at the same time as the store, and all you can see is two houses and a baseball diamond. They had carriages; horses and buggies tied up to a hitch right in the back of the store. It was very interesting to find it, because we didn't know exactly how all this came about. A lot of times the things that are important to us now were not important at the time that they actually happened. Margot's aunt Etta was interested in keeping things, so she kept quite a few things. Some of the things have been given away, but they used to have sausage makers and all this type of thing. It's been a gradual change, as far as the town. Now Margot can tell you that this store is strictly a convenience store. It operates at our convenience. When the time that a large supermarket came in, a small country grocery store that's in an area that only has about 200 homes, you stock what you feel that people need, and that's it. And you get caught up in all the local gossip, and that's part of it.

BO: When your father leased the land, he grew beets?

JA: Yes.

BO: And then you lived in Salinas.

JA: No, we lived on the ranch; there was a ranch house.

BO: Where exactly was that?

JA: Well, the ranch house was approximately, I'd say, a quarter of a mile west of the town of Spreckels, laid back from the road. It was one of the original ranch houses that were here before Claus Spreckels bought the property.

BO: It's east of the factory site, is that right, toward the Gabilan Hills?







JA: Yes. Well, it would be west of the town of Spreckels along Spreckels Boulevard. We bordered Spreckels Boulevard. Any lessee of Spreckels property had to grow a certain percentage of the ground that they leased in sugar beets. When my father started in, during campaign time, because of the water the Spreckels Sugar Company used, our wells lost 50 percent of their capacity, so they supplemented that water with excess wastewater that had been used in washing the beets and in the process of making sugar. That was piped all through this whole area.

BO: In the 1930s?

JA: They started earlier, before that. It stopped in the latter part of the thirties and the early forties. Actually the water had a lot of lime in it. Also, since it had been used in washing sugar beets that came from all over, if there were any diseases, they got transferred.

BO: It is my understanding it carried the nematode.

JA: Yes, that's what brought the nematode all through this particular area.

BO: They had to stop.

JA: Yes, they had to stop.

BO: We have someone else who's joined us here. Your name is—?

(Merton Elliot joins us at the soda fountain for coffee)

MERTON ELLIOTT: My name is Merton Elliott. I'd just like to add a little to Jack's deal on this water system, where we used to pump the waste water out and irrigate with it. The farmers used to tell me—now, I don't know that it's true, but they said the lettuce or whatever would be about so high, maybe just breaking through the ground, and they'd put that warm water on there, and it would jump about six inches. It was real interesting. We didn't think there was that much nematode in the water that it infected all the lands, but somebody got that idea, so then they pumped irrigation water (from the river or wells).

BO: Well, between that and the beet blight, I think there were some serious problems in growing beets for a while. Where were you watching them pump?

ELLIOTT: Where was I watching them? Well, I used to assist in running the pumps and stuff that did the irrigating, so I know. Sometimes I'd have to stay late, and sometimes I'd have to get up early in the morning and go down.

BO: What was your position in the company?

ELLIOTT: I was working in the electrical department there. I eventually became the head of the electrical department.

BO: Did you grow up in Spreckels?

ELLIOTT: Well, I moved here in 1929. I started with Spreckels Sugar Company.

BO: Are you in the same house that you first lived in?







ELLIOTT: Oh no, no, I'm now renovating a house that I built in 1941, and I'm going to move back out here. I haven't been here since 1946. I was working and living in Salinas.

BO: Jack, when you were there, was the Riverside Hotel there?

JA: Oh yes, absolutely.

MA: I even remember the Riverside Hotel.

JA: Not only that, but there was a restaurant right in it, wasn't there?

BO: Tell me about the Riverside Hotel. I've seen some pictures of it, and I don't know much about it. I know that it was near Hilltown, is that right?

JA: It was called Hilltown. It was quite a hotel. It had a lot of history behind it, and there was a dance hall down there at the time. They used to have dances. Particularly the Spreckels Fire Department once a year would hold an annual big dance down there to raise revenue.

BO: The restaurant? Was it good food?

JA: What was the name of it? When two sisters operated it—

MA: Petersen's?

JA: Petersen's, yes. Petersens operated it. They were related to the Paulsens. (Unclear) lived down there, Danish, and their two sisters.

BO: What happened to the hotel? It's not there now.

JA: It just gradually—

MA: They changed the road.

JA: When they put the new building in, that changed the whole idea.

MA: They had a different bridge.

JA: The old bridge, somebody ought to have a picture of that.

MA: Yes, we have a picture somewhere.

BO: Was the Riverside Hotel part of the Spreckels Ranch? Was it owned by Spreckels?

JA: I guess originally it was.

JA?: When they first started Spreckels, there used to be a gate on Spreckels Boulevard, and Riverside, or Hilltown, or whatever you might want to call it, was on the outside of that. It's always been privately owned, as far as I can tell.





BO: And that gate was part of the 8-foot-high white picket fence, is that correct? I see. That explains the photograph in that book. (The white picket fence extended along the west side of Spreckels Boulevard from Hilltown on the north to Spreckels on the south.)

ELLIOTT: . . . used to take care of the people in Spreckels, and if they knew you, you could have a charge account, and then of course you had to pay your bill, naturally, or else you got in trouble. But of course Etta was one of the nicest persons I can remember. A lot of the old timers didn't pay their bills. She never forced them to either. Some of them you wouldn't think would have done that, but they did.

BO: We're looking at a photo of the Riverside Hotel. I don't see a picket fence.

MA: These are the later pictures, I guess.

BO: I see. These are in the 1940s?

MA: Here are some pictures with the fence. This is the main office, and there's the fence. And here are the pepper trees, and here is the fence. You look from the main office.

BO: This is the labor camp.

MA: On the other side, right next to the railroad.

BO: We're looking at the bungalow block here, which was built right across from the store, across the railroad tracks.

ELLIOTT: Oh yes; I'd forgotten we had some of those pictures. We later had a service station down there. This is the hotel, and this is where the dance hall was, over there. And there's where the service station was there. Can you remember what that was, Jack? Was that where they pumped—

(Everybody talking at once)

JA: This is when they put in the road, and they moved the service station.

BO: We're looking at a nighttime photo, looking from the river side of the factory (looking at a photograph of the lime trestle taken at night with extensive lighting). Then the other photo is from the other side.

ELLIOTT: That would be (looking at the factory from the river), this way, and these, you can see the peephole kind of thing on top of the stack, that used to be there. We had to take those off. I think it was at the time we switched from oil to natural gas. They found that this interfered with the damper too much.

BO: In the boiler house.

ELLIOTT: Yes, the boiler house. The boiler house is right underneath here.

BO: Well, Merton, that's very well lit. What kind of lighting was installed there originally?







ELLIOTT: In the building at that time? Well, that was all incandescent lighting, and operated off of a 250-volt DC system, which was throughout the whole factory. The factory operated on 250 volts DC. In order to pump the water up to the reservoir, which was up on the top of the hill over there—it used to take 110 pounds pressure out of there. They had a steam pump that used to pump the water up there, because while they were operating they had plenty of steam that they could do that with. As the years went on, they got electric pumps to pump the water up the hill. If the factory was actually running, the reservoir pumps were in the factory itself, the old duplex pumps—one action to pull water, and the other action to push it up the hill, push that pressure up there. While they weren't operating, they had it arranged that they had to keep one or two boilers on, and just fire up enough to run this other reservoir pump, which was down where our oil receiving tanks were also. They had to keep somebody on the job to keep the reservoirs filled, until—well, I don't know if at the point when I first came they were still doing that, or later, when they put an electric pump on it and pumped it up the hill. Originally there were four DC generators. In about 1937, I think, they added a new modern DC generator, which gave us five generators that could operate in parallel to service the factory. Most of the time we'd get by with four generators.

BO: Where were the generators located?

ELLIOTT: They were in the main engine room, right in the center of this building here, right in the middle on the first floor.

BO: On the first floor.

ELLIOTT: Yes. As well as the vacuum pumps for the vacuum pans. All the auxiliary equipment that was needed, like the oil pumps and stuff. Some of them were in the boiler room and some of them were in the main room.

BO: There's a room called 1B or 1A, I believe, that's referred to as the generator room at some point, between the boiler house and the main factory.

ELLIOTT: In later years we had new generators in a separate room, but before that the generators were right in the same building on the first floor.

BO: Where was the separate room for the new generators?

ELLIOTT: They were in what we called the boiler room, and that could have been 1B, because that was off to—the main building was here—and you can faintly see that there's another one over here, real low here, and that was the boiler room, and then the Steffens Building, and all that stuff.

BO: When did they switch to AC current?

ELLIOTT: They actually didn't switch to AC current completely until 1950, I think, when we installed our first alternator. And then it was a combination of AC and DC. A few years after that we installed the other alternator. We just had the two; we had a 3,000 and a 4,000 hp machine.

BO: I want to get back to Jack, to talk about the store a little more. What do you have here, Jack?







JA: This is an old photograph. This is when it was Ford & Sanborn, when they first opened it up.

BO: It has Ford & Sanborn General Merchandise written on it. Do you know who's standing out front?

JA: No, I do not know.

BO: It's before the Post Office, before the Louvre was built.

JA: Yes.

BO: So this is when it was built, it looks like.

JA: This was when it was first occupied by Ford & Sanborn. There is also on the other wall, over here, a big sign that's still there; you can still see it. In fact all the signs, they were covered over, but they had been left by Vollmer, the same as up here on the Hatton St. side, and Red and White Store outside, because Juhler was associated with Red and White. And the Bank of Spreckels was up there too.

BO: You have layers of history on the exterior and the interior. That is a wonderful photo. They curved the awning, or canopy in the front corner, and it looks like it funnels the water to one point (to drop the water into the street corner). That's very interesting in terms of engineering design.

JA: Well, this metal covering used to extend farther into the street until they put in storm drains and gutters. The Spreckels Store always had a concrete sidewalk and had gutters. The only other place in town that had it up to 1970 was the school and the Memorial Building. Otherwise, you didn't park on the curbs because there was a ditch. The water went into the ditch. But when they did this (concrete sidewalk addition) they used the Memorial Building as the benchmark (for grading), and everything was judged from there. Then they nailed the sidewalk down, and they had to narrow the sidewalk (in front of the store), especially on the corner, because when the trucks made the turn they tipped it. (The original canopy had to be narrowed at the corner.)

BO: The narrow gauge, or the Southern Pacific, brought all the goods for the store.

ELLIOTT: It wasn't Southern Pacific in those days. What did they call it—Spreckels Valley—?

BO: Pajaro something railway?

JA: It was a narrow gauge, yes.

BO: You remember that?

JA: The old narrow gauge? Yes.

BO: It came in through the other side of the store, is that correct?

JA: Just practically where the Southern Pacific is now.







BO: Where was the depot?

JA: Right there on the right-hand side.

MA: Duplexes, that's where the depot was.

JA: No, on the other side. That building was on the other side of the road. The little building that was the depot was on the right-hand side of the road, going over there. The other side was the boxcar and stuff. And then the Scale House was down there.

MA: There was a brick building too above the Scale House.

JA: Yes, that was a brick building. There was the Scale House, and they weighed all the beets as they came in. But the actual depot was on the right-hand side there, where the road intersects. (The depot was a wooden structure on the east side of Spreckels Boulevard; the brick scale house was on the west side of Spreckels Boulevard.)

BO: So the train would bring passengers in, and they'd let them off at the depot across the street. The passengers would come across here.

MA: Well, workers mostly.

JA: Yes, mostly workers that came out from town.

BO: And the beets were weighed on this side, on the town side of Spreckels Boulevard.

JA: Yes. Well, it was quite a ways; it was up there about equivalent of—Third Street, I guess it was. No, a little further. It was between Second and Third Street that the Scale House was over there.

BO: Was that brick also?

JA: Same style as the depot.

BO: Who was the manager of the factory at the time you were here?

JA: Well, as far as I know— let's see, Mr. Pioda. And before Pioda, I don't remember who it was. Do you?

MA: (Unclear)

BO: Did you know Mr. Pioda?

ELLIOTT: Very well, very well. He was a wonderful man. When the war broke out, we had a superintendent down here by the name Llewellyn, and when I signed up to go in the Navy, I said, "Well, I'd like to know what my condition is going to be when I get back. Am I going to have a job with Spreckels Sugar Company or not?" He said, "Nope, if you're enlisted, that's yours," he says, "and you won't have anything when you come back to Spreckels Sugar Company." So I didn't take that for an answer, and I called up Rose Rhyner, who was Mr. Pioda's secretary, and she told him that I wanted to see him, so I went up, made an appointment, and sat in his office, and explained what my situation was, that I





had signed up to go in the Navy, and told Mr. Pioda what Llewellyn had said. He said, "Never mind what he said. I'm the manager here, and when you come back you'll have your job back again." I always respected Mr. Pioda, all the years of association that I had with him. One day I was working on a Saturday. Another fellow and I were out on one of the ranches, working on a pumping plant, and a bar slipped and smashed my toe. At noon we came in; we were down in the shop, and somebody said, "Gee, you'd better go to the doctor," and I said, "No, I'm not going to the doctor." First thing I know, here comes Mr. Pioda, and he says, "What happened to you, Merton?" I told him, and he says, "You go to the doctor right now," he says, "right now." So I did. He was a wonderful man. I had a lot of association with him. And going back to our water problem that we've got today, I can't ever forget this. I was talking to Mr. Pioda about it one time, and he said— it must have been in the early twenties when he said this—he said, "Some day this valley is going to be short of water." And he said he wanted to see a dam go in on Arroyo Seco. He had engineered this dam, and he said it would cost the taxpayers \$200,000 to put in a dam on Arroyo Seco. Here was a man that had foresight, really had foresight. A lot of people say Spreckels Sugar Company didn't have the area around here in their hearts, but Mr. Pioda sure did.

BO: He has been credited with surveying the town, and he surveyed the factory site.

ELLIOTT: Yes.

BO: And then you knew Rose Rhyner as well.

ELLIOTT: Yes, I knew Rose Rhyner real well.

BO: Did you know Joseph Rhyner?

ELLIOTT: Joseph Rhyner?

MA: Rose's father.

ELLIOTT: Rose's father? Well, just slightly. I didn't know him very well. I knew Rose's brother real well, Bill Rhyner.

BO: I understand that Mr. Pioda and Mr. Rhyner probably designed the factory.

ELLIOTT: Well, I think you're correct in assuming that, because that's what it says on the drawings.

BO: Where on the drawings does it say that?

ELLIOTT: Well, it doesn't say it in so many words, but I mean, you know, a lot of these drawings—I don't know if any more of them are available, whether they junked them all or not. It's a shame that they didn't save more of them, but I think that probably Joseph Rhyner was just as accomplished a man when it came to making the drawings as his son Bill. Bill could sit at a drawing board, and he'd sit here, and if he wanted to put something on this side of the drawing he'd use his left hand, and on the other side he'd use his right hand. I think he was very ambidextrous, and I think his father was the same way. And Bill could look at things and put them down in three dimensions and make people like me, a layman, that I couldn't understand, and fix it so I would understand it. The fact is, in the early days when we did put in the electrical centrifugals, which was in 1957, we had a job of taking out the old crystallizers because we were putting in modern crystallizers. The old







crystallizers, I don't know, they weighed umpteen tons, and they all were trying to figure out how to do this. So Bill drew up schematics on how to do this job, and everybody said it wouldn't work. So he made a little scale model, and jacked these things up, took them down and turned them very intricately like that, and then back down to the opening he put in the outside of the building. I was at the meeting when he told them that. He says, "This can be done. I've got it right here, and this shows you." He says, "You don't have to read my schematics. You can look at what I've got here for you." They finally did that. It was around '57, or a little earlier.

BO: When did they put the new crystallizers in.

ELLIOTT: It was a big job. All the centrifugals, new centrifugals, and new crystallizers, and all that stuff, starting from one end to the other in the sugar end. They took out all the old-time centrifugals. The old-time centrifugals were driven off of the main steam engine through belt drives, and one man would take care of two centrifugals. Finally when they modernized, they had one man on the floor, two men actually, that would take care of all those.

BO: Labor saving.

ELLIOTT: Oh yes. It was a better product too, because they didn't have to depend on a human to know it was at a certain consistency.

BO: Did they use the bridge that went across the middle of the factory—there was a bridge; did it look down into something?

ELLIOTT: A bridge that went across the middle of the factory? Oh, there was a catwalk, we called it—a catwalk that went from the sugar end to the beet end, yes.

BO: There was also one that went width-wise across the center of the factory, that had an arch to it.

ELLIOTT: Yes, that's right.

BO: That was another catwalk?

ELLIOTT: Well, you'd go from the sugar end, you'd go up—it was on the fourth floor. You'd get on the fourth floor, and you walked along—the other one was right along the south wall, and you'd go to approximately the center of the building, and then the crosswalk came across. It intersected, we'll say, maybe 50 feet out from the building. One belt kept going, on toward the beet end, where they had all the filter presses and so on, and the other one, like you say the arched one, it was across the center of the building, and it continued on to the other side of the building, and came down a set of steps to a level, and that was the offices for the factory superintendent, in there.

BO: I walked across that bridge, and then I did walk by the offices before it was demolished. If I were walking across that bridge, could I look down? Was it used for supervising a certain area?

ELLIOTT: Oh, I don't think it was ever used for that. You could have done that. We had a few unscrupulous people probably that did it, but far and wide I don't think they did that kind of thing.







BO: So the superintendents were in those offices. That's approximately the third or fourth floor.

ELLIOTT: It would be the third floor. It was a between level. It was like the third floor level. That was the office of the superintendent—the shift superintendent, they called him. And then you had the sugar end foreman and the beet end foreman in there.

BO: Do you think that Mr. Pioda designed the exterior of the factory? Did he ever mention or say anything about that?

ELLIOTT: Well, I wouldn't know that for sure, but I think he probably worked fairly closely with Claus Spreckels, and I have an idea that they all worked out together, to figure out what they wanted.

BO: Did you ever meet a man named Moore?

ELLIOTT: Well, there's more than one Moore concerned with the Spreckels Sugar Company. There was Sam Moore and then the other Moore, Mr. Moore. No, I never met him.

BO: There was another Moore named Andrew Moore, and a Joseph Moore.

ELLIOTT: I never met either one of those.

BO: From Risdon Iron Works?

ELLIOTT: No, I didn't.

BO: They apparently engineered and built the machinery that was in the factory.

ELLIOTT: Oh, I have no doubt of that. A lot of it came over from Germany, German built. The old vacuum pumps were all German. The generators were General Electric designed.

BO: Is there any truth to the idea that possibly bricks for the factory were brought over as ballast in the boats from Germany?

ELLIOTT: I think that's somebody's fairy tale. I think they were all made here.

BO: They were made here?

ELLIOTT: I think so.

BO: Do you think on site?

ELLIOTT: Well, I don't know on site necessarily, but there have been some reports that they were made someplace and floated up the river, and I don't know about that either. It may be true, but I hesitate to think even in those days that with the amount of bricks that we had available here in the state of California, that they would ever ship them from Germany or anyplace else. Of course it's just like the consistency of the bricks, everybody says, well, this and that, but the thing is that over the period of years that the bricks have been there, some of the bricks are worth money and the others aren't worth anything,





because you just strike them and they'll split right smack in half—because they're just absolutely so brittle that if you just touch them practically they'll break. And then others are so hard that you can't drive a nail in them.

BO: Do any of you remember the tunnel that went from Building 1, underneath the Boilerhouse, to Sugar House 5?

ELLIOTT: Yep.

BO: Tell me about that.

ELLIOTT: Well, in the olden days they had a system whereby these little carts, we'll say, with sugar would go—let's see, it would be up above, and then it would come down, and then they had an elevator. All these carts would drop down on this track that went underneath the tunnel. I've been through the tunnel.

BO: Was it an electric elevator, or hydraulic?

ELLIOTT: Oh no, it was like a belt, like—what do they call them now?

BO: Dumbwaiter?

ELLIOTT: Similar to a dumbwaiter, yes. These things would get on that, and they'd go down like that, down to the tunnel.

BO: With sugar sacks, or people?

ELLIOTT: Oh not people, no, no, no. No, I think the sugar was in the raw state when it went down there, and then went out to the warehouse.

BO: How did it go out to the warehouse?

ELLIOTT: I think those old cars were electric. I think that was on the electric system.

BO: And that would bring all the sugar to the warehouse?

ELLIOTT: Yes.

BO: You were down there?

ELLIOTT: Well, it wasn't operating when I went through there, but I could see what would happen in the olden days. I guess the tunnels and rails are still there. It's interesting, because—I guess it was 1950 when we put the new alternator in, and we had to have a sufficient ground to ground the system, so we started to drill a hole alongside one of the columns to drive the ground rod, and we couldn't get through. We didn't know what was wrong. So we moved out quite a ways. Finally we got a drawing that shows the foundation that these columns sat on; you'd be surprised at the size of that thing. So we went out far enough that we knew we weren't hitting that, and then we went down and—I don't know whether we got down 10, 15, maybe 20 feet, and couldn't get it any further. We finally wound up having to drill a hole through another floor that went down that deep.

[END OF SIDE 1; BEGIN SIDE 2]







... Finally we were able to drive our ground rod, and then we shaped it to come up alongside the column.

BO: So you found another floor underneath the ground floor?

ELLIOTT: Yes. The existing ground floor now, we found another one underneath that.

BO: Did that extend through the entire factory?

ELLIOTT: That I don't know. There was an alley in between the two buildings, and that's where the generator room was.

BO: There was a floor under there.

ELLIOTT: Yes.

BO: Right in the tunnel.

ELLIOTT: No, I don't think so. I think that was just a floor.

BO: I wonder when they put that in, and what the reason was.

ELLIOTT: I couldn't tell you. The soil underneath the factory, where I was associated with any digging or anything, was always sort of sandy. It might have been that they had to do that to get a foundation under the thing.

BO: To put a footing, yes. When I look at this photo, we have a nighttime photo of the building, and I see only two lime kilns.

ELLIOTT: What do you mean, two lime kilns?

BO: There's only two there, two stacks.

ELLIOTT: Well now, I don't know how far back that would have been, but there's actually four.

BO: There were four?

ELLIOTT: One, two, three.

BO: There were three at one time. Are there lights on the lime trestle?

ELLIOTT: Yes, we had lights up there, you betcha.

BO: Were people walking up there?

ELLIOTT: Well, that's the only way you can get out there. You had to walk out there. There was a catwalk there.

BO: Why would someone walk out there?





ELLIOTT: There was two rock cars, and one of them would be over this area here, or be operating back and forth. You couldn't use the other car till this one was parked over here. At times they used two cars at the same time, which the structure wasn't built for—but they did it anyway, because they knew it was strong enough, and it was. The structure could handle two rock cars out there at once, lifting these big buckets of rock. The rock car operator would be out here. In the old days they filled all these buckets by hand. The laborers would unload the rock cars. They'd dump out what they could. They were bottom-emptying cars, and they'd dump it out the bottom on the trestle down here. And then they had to throw the rest of the rock out of the cars to get it out of there. Then when the rock cars would come out here, they had a bucket on them, and they'd drop it down and they'd load those buckets by hand. In later years we did away with that and did it by belts and so on and so forth. That's the way that was handled. I've worked up there at 2 o'clock in the morning sometimes, when there was fog and rain and everything else. But you had to have those things going, or else the lime kilns couldn't go.

BO: How did they run, exactly? What powered them?

ELLIOTT: They ran on 260 volts DC, big electric motors. When one of those went out, you worked 24 hours a day to get it back.

BO: And a pulley system?

ELLIOTT: Oh yes, well, it had a hoisting system like any cable hoisting. It had a big drum, and the cable would wind off and then wind back, and there was grooves in the drums where the cables fit right in there.

BO: How much lime rock would be in a bucket?

ELLIOTT: Oh, roughly around 30,000 pounds.

BO: Thirty thousand pounds in one bucket! That's quite a bit.

ELLIOTT: I may be off a little bit, but somewhere around there. And those buckets were—well, one man couldn't handle one of those buckets. When it was on the end of the cable, and you had to set them on a certain spot, it'd take about three or four men to pull that thing over.

BO: How did they burn that lime?

ELLIOTT: Well, they brought the lime rock in, and then they also brought what was called—they had coal, but they also had coke, and they burned the coke with the lime rock.

BO: Where did the coke come from?

ELLIOTT: I don't know where it came from. It came in by rail in cars, the same as the coal that they used to buy in the olden days. In the old days they bought coal for the factory, but they also furnished all the employees in town, because we didn't have natural gas here, so they could buy coal through the company and use the coal in their stoves at home.

BO: So this would come on the trestle, and the buckets would then go along the trestle to the top of the stacks of the lime kilns, is that correct?







ELLIOTT: Well, there was a trestle down here where the cars were switched in to dump the stuff. And then they would load it into the buckets in the rock cars and lift it up on this trestle here and take it in here and dump it here. Mr. Rhyner was very instrumental in changing this system so that they didn't have to have a fellow standing there to dump those buckets. It just when it would go up there and they'd set the bucket down, it would automatically trip it and dump it. In the olden days it didn't work that way. Bill Rhyner fixed it so it would dump.

BO: And then that would burn.

ELLIOTT: Yes.

BO: Where would they take the burnt lime?

ELLIOTT: Well, burnt lime, when it's in the right condition, and comes out of that—they had to keep track of the firing and all that, and as it burned down they had to keep adding or it would burn too fast. But when it came out of the lime kilns, then it went into the crusher. It was what we called the Raymond mills. They were tremendous things. The rollers were like this, and the lime rock would go into the grinders and come out ground.

BO: What did they do with the ground lime after that?

ELLIOTT: Well, they used it in the process.

BO: This was the calcined lime.

ELLIOTT: Yes. From the lime kiln building it went over to the main building, where it was introduced into the sugar, and that was on the—let's see, the second floor, I guess, we used to lime it.

BO: Working on that trestle at two in the morning in the rain, with—how many volts were you working with?

ELLIOTT: Two hundred and fifty volts DC. Of course we wouldn't have it energized when we were working out there. You'd get killed if you did.

MA: Do you remember when we got electric lights?

ELLIOTT: When we got electric lights here? I would think it was in the late twenties.

BO: Jack and Margot have brought out what looks like very fancy money here, or something. What are these, Jack?

JA: This is the shares of stock for the Spreckels Emporium Company. I was trying to get dates, and that's why I was looking at this, because they had 200 shares—

[Merton Elliott leaves]

JA: I was trying to authenticate dates, because what happened with Ford & Sanborn, they left the store in 1905 and moved into Salinas at the corner of Gabilan and Main Street.







Then this store lay vacant until Mr. Vollmer in '07 reactivated the store. He had a lease with Spreckels.

BO: We're looking at the lease.

JA: At the lease, 1907. It was for five years. But Mr. Vollmer had problems, and that's when Spreckels Emporium Company was formed, and he was one of the stockholders. I have here the book that has all the shares of stock, and it tells the people who were the original share owners and how many shares they had, and when they were canceled. This started in August of 1909, when they took over from Mr. Vollmer, and then it was canceled in 1912. I'm just trying to get the exact date here; it was August 14, 1912, when Mr. Juhler, Margot's great-uncle bought out the rest of the stockholders. Original issuance of stock was on August 30, 1909, and then later on, on September 1, 1909, there were additional shares of stock.

BO: Beautiful, beautiful pieces. Gold seal, and State of California symbol.

JA: It was incorporated in the State of California.

BO: And embossed.

MA: Yes, we have the seal, too. This is an old store.

JA: I think the last certificate that they had was dated '91, and that was for only one share. That was J.M. Juhler, for one share.

BO: 1912?

JA: 1912, yes.

MA: The loose ones, you can have some of these.

BO: Oh no, no; I think the book should remain intact.

MA: But there's nothing on it.

BO: You mean I can't go to the bank with it?

JA: It won't give you title to the store, let's put it that way.

BO: These are just beautiful. This is your aunt, J.M. Juhler here?

MA: J.M. Juhler is her father.

BO: One hundred dollars worth of stock. Putnam. There's another Juhler for another hundred; another Juhler for another hundred; Let's look up front here.

JA: Yes, you start from the very beginning.

BO: Mr. Rowe, he was chief engineer (c. 1917).

MA: That's correct.





BO: We have Victor Bonito. Gandy.

JA: Yes, secretary.

BO: Mr. C.L. Pioda, 1909, for \$100. Johnston. Day. Daniel Burr. John Storm. Smiley. Varda, Mr. Varda Senior. Dougherty and Lacey—that rings a bell.

JA: It's all Salinas families, as far as that's concerned.

JA: Margot showed me the bill of sale of a Cadillac, in 1912, and he bought it from Mr. Lacey. It gave the address of the garage, and it was fireproof, and it was open 24 hours a day.

BO: These are just wonderful.

JA: I brought out two different series of checks for the Bank of Spreckels. One, you see, it says nineteen zero and then it's blank; and then the other was 1910, and then were blanks. It doesn't have any entries. They're all addressed to Spreckels Emporium. We don't have anything else. We kept the checks, in case someday maybe we can go back in the banking business. These are the original by-laws of the Spreckels Emporium, and it says when it was incorporated and who the officers were, and what their pay was, their compensation as directors.

BO: 1910.

JA: They canceled the directors' fees in 1910.

BO: Do you have anything about Mrs. Claus Spreckels?

JA: I don't have it here with us, but we do have correspondence that Mr. Juhler had with their attorneys when they were trying to buy this building. Mrs. Spreckels had passed away by the time they were going to purchase this building, so all the heirs lived in England. Of course, it was a tremendous feat to correspond with the people in England and find the heirs, and have them agree to the sale. It took quite a bit of time before they could finally get all the heirs together and get their approval for the sale of the store to Mr. Juhler.

(We are looking at old photographs of the Factory and Town)

MA: This is what it used to look like when we were running at night (Building 1 at Factory 1).

BO: Oh, that is fantastic. A nighttime shot. That's a beautiful photograph.

JA: See, that is late because the silos are here.

MA: That's 1970. One of the men in town, he took the photograph; he's still a photographer.

JA: This is the old bridge that used to go across to Monterey, Highway 68. This was replaced. This is actually not from the Salinas side, this is from the Monterey side. River Road used to go along here.







BO: That's the Hilltown Bridge.

JA: That's correct.

BO: And this looks like the Spreckels Bridge.

JA: Yes.

BO: In 1914?

MA: Yes, somewhere like that.

BO: Completely demolished.

JA: They lost part of it. A couple times they lost part of it. They had to build it over again. . . . These are all Watsonville photographs.

MA: This is going to Moss Landing. That's the railroad coming . . .

BO: What is that overhead wire here? Is it electricity that's coming in?

JA: I assume so, but I don't know. These pictures are here because Mr. Juhler worked at Watsonville.

MA: He worked for the factory in Watsonville and then transferred over here.

JA: Of course this is at Moss Landing. They had a whaling station there.

BO: That's the whaling station at Moss Landing.

(Looking at pictures)

JA: We have one other thing; I think you might have seen it.

BO: Oh yes, I've seen that. That's a very, very nice photo.

JA: This is where the vacant lot is over here. This is where these buildings were, right here.

BO: What was this? A harness shop?

JA: Yes, a harness shop.

MA: A butcher shop, a grocery shop, the newspaper, a barbershop.

BO: Now, where is this grocery shop—across the street from the Emporium? (Later there was a gas station here and it is currently a vacant lot.)

MA: Yes. There always was competition.

BO: What year was this photo taken?





JA: This was given to us by Mr. Hughes, because the Hughes family was the one that had the harness shop.

BO: Is this the original photo?

MA: No, this is a copy.

BO: Do you know who is in the photo?

JA: No, I don't know who is in the photo. I wish we had Mr. Hughes here, if he's still alive. He could tell you, I think, who is in this.

BO: If you talk to him, find out.

JA: I will.

[More photos; postcards]

BO: Did you make the postcards here?

MA: No, there used to be people coming around making photographs. They would give you a book to put them in, and then you could order them.

BO: This is a photo of—

JA: Of the resident factory manager's, what I call Mr. Pioda's, house. This is where he lived. The original manager's house was near the T & A (Tanemura & Antle) Headquarters Building.

BO: Oh, that's where W.C. Waters lived.

JA: It also had facilities for guests, people from San Francisco, that wanted to come down from the main office. They could come down and they could stay; they had quarters for them there. Of course when this burned down, then they built this one here. At the same time they built in the park a building, 50 foot square, for guests.

BO: The Club House? (70 Third Street)

JA: And now that's the residence. On this side of the town of Spreckels, from Hatton to Llano, originally there were only four two-story houses. One was the doctor's living quarters (37 Hatton Avenue); the other was the factory manager's office (43 Hatton Avenue); the third was the resident manager's home (81 Llano Avenue); and the fourth one was the—I call it bachelor quarters (70 Third Street).

BO: The Club House?

JA: The Club House. They were the only four two-story houses. All the rest of the two-story houses were original buildings that were put up by Claus Spreckels, from Hatton to Railroad Avenue. Everything else on this side traditionally has always been single-story houses.





BO: Prior to that I think there was something called the Cooper House. Do you know of that? It appears in an advertisement in the Spreckels *Courier* in 1908.

JA: Are they talking about the house that was in the Las Palmas subdivision. That was an old home of the same period as these homes here. Mr. Violini used it for his personal home for years, but when they bought the ranch, they used that—well, they fixed it up beautifully, and then used it as their offices.

BO: There's a reference to a Club House, where people went to eat, in the Spreckels *Courier*, 1907 and 1908 issues of the magazine, and a Mrs. Cooper took it over, and was famous for her meals.

JA: Hm.

BO: And people began not to eat at the hotel as much as they began to start eating at the Cooper house, and it was particularly noted for Sunday dinners. But I cannot locate the building.

JA: I don't know either. We'll have to keep our eyes open, because I don't know. Whether or not one of the houses here—I wouldn't think so, because Claus Spreckels owned all those houses. I wouldn't think he would go in competition to himself.

BO: But mostly we had two-story houses on that side of the street, on the other side of Hatton, and there were lots in between, large garden lots.

MA: No, on the right-hand side. There was none over on that side.

JA: Well, up until 1930, the area that—the pictures that you saw of the other commercial development, on the other side of that was open ground. There were houses on First Street, on both sides, but there were no houses on Spreckels Boulevard, from here (Hatton Avenue) to Llano. And there were these four two-story houses off it on that particular block. The rest of the houses around the park were brought in, and so they're a little different architecture than the ones that were constructed on the other side of town. Some of the houses, we understand, from looking at the *Honey Dew News*, were brought in from Gilroy, because Claus Spreckels owned property, and when he sold that property he brought the houses down here.

BO: Also from the ranches. Let's come back to these photos. These are huge pepper trees.

JA: Yes, this is a park over here. This is Tom Ryan's house, and then Mr. Shulke lives right here. The Club House is down here; you can't see it. What you see there—you see these little palm trees? They're about this tall, around the edges of these houses. That's what that was.

MA: We had unpaved streets and sidewalks until the 1970s. So this was dirt and then a ditch.

JA: You can see here, the sidewalk was not a sidewalk, it was a dirt sidewalk.

BO: Very well maintained.







JA: It better be, because the man who was in charge of the park—I have to tell you a story. When we came here in 1932, we lived on a ranch and we walked to school, and we made the mistake of going through the park, and he caught us on the way back, and he says, "I don't allow any kids in my park." He said, "You have to be with your parents, because you kids get in too much trouble." In the center of the park was a big fish pond, and we were entranced with those fish. They had these beautiful big goldfish, and we were really just enjoying them. From that day on we never went close to that park unless we were with our parents, because Mr. Anderson didn't want any kids in that park. It was a beautiful park. He kept it immaculate, and everything around it was immaculate, and that's why it looked like it did. It wasn't his park, but he considered it his park and took care of it.

[Looking at more photographs]

BO: Now these trees, these are the walnut trees.

JA: No, those I think you'll find are mostly pepper trees.

BO: Yes, the shaggy bark looks like a pepper.

JA: It could also be walnut, because there was a big fence here, a white fence on this side of the street.

MA: It could be the walnut trees on one side, the pepper trees on the other side.

BO: But I think you're right that these are peppers here. It looks like a mixture of the two.

MA: There were almond trees in between. We had pepper trees and almond trees in between.

JA: But not in town. That was on the other side of the street. There were two almond trees, then a walnut tree, then some almonds.

BO: Too bad they don't continue as they used to, along the Boulevard.

(The trees were cut down to allow more sun onto adjacent growing fields owned by Tanemura & Antle.)

BO: This looks like the hotel.

JA: That is the hotel.

BO: Tell me about the hotel. When was that destroyed?

JA: That was destroyed just before the war. I don't know for sure. I think I was going to college at the time, so I don't really remember. I think they put trailers in there during the wartime for people, where the hotel used to be, so it had to be done either '39 or '40, I don't know just when.

BO: Where did you go to college?





JA: University of California at Berkeley. There used to be a Boy Scout house across the street, where these two little houses are down here. Of course we lived on the ranch, so we rode our bicycles down to here, and parked them inside the Boy Scout house. Victorini was the first bus operator, and then Mr. Robb later on took it over. He provided the transportation into Salinas for us to go to high school. That's one of the pictures of the park. It was a beautiful park, and it had a tremendous variety of trees. When we were Boy Scouts and we were trying to get our merit badge for forestry, we'd use this park to be able to identify trees, because they were kept up beautifully and Mr. Anderson knew every one like the back of his hand, so he could tell us exactly what kind of tree it was, where it came from, and everything else.

BO: He did a lot of the planting as well?

JA: Yes. He was the official custodian for Spreckels.

BO: Very beautiful. It's a Victorian back yard.

JA: Um hm. I think there are some more photographs here, of the fish pond. It was enclosed with a metal fence. It also was enclosed with a hedge around the outside of it. You can see it here; here's the hedge, and there's the fish pond in there. Those goldfish were handled with loving care. There was bamboo in one place, and the kids would cut off the bamboo, and of course they'd become excellent fish spears, and he would—

BO: Now we're looking at a factory photo. This is the Pulp Dryer Building, is it not?

JA: I do not know, because I only went down to the factory to look it to go on a tour, and that was it.

MA: This is the P.V. Railroad (Pajaro Valley Consolidated Railroad) coming in. That's the end of the line for it.

BO: What are we looking at here?

JA: This is the office down here, and this is where all the sugar beets were dumped, off the railroad cars or off trucks.

BO: These are the beet bins.

JA: Yes, there are the beet bins, that's correct. And there's the sluice that comes along.

BO: You have eucalyptus trees on the left, and the beet bins on the right. This is prior to the reconstruction.

JA: Yes.

BO: One of them at the other end is very tall. I wonder why that is.

JA: Well, that might have been the high line.

MA: The high line, you can see the concrete square down there. That's where the high line came in.







BO: The gravity brought it in. What were these sheds for?

JA: I think most of these—I can remember going with my father and dumping in these sheds. There was an opening in the center, and you'd go in and the trucks were dumped, pivoted at one side, and the beets were dumped into the sluice box. And of course every load that you brought in, they took samples, and they took those down to the sample office (Tare Lab), and that's where you found out how much sugar you had in your shipment. You were paid by the percentage of sugar that you had.

MA: Plus the tonnage.

JA: Well, they weighed them all, which was different than some other places, because other places worked on averages. But this, if you were a good farmer, you made good money; if you weren't a good farmer you made less, because it was an individual process, and it was a very fair process. Some of the other beet factories up in the valley averaged everybody. That really hurt the good farmers and helped the bad ones.

BO: When you ran the store, both of you ran it together.

JA: No, no, no. This is my wife's store. I'm just the stock boy. I'm a retired farmer, and I came and started helping her in about 1979 when I retired.

BO: Now we've got it clear. So you're the store proprietor. Let me ask you this. At some time, you must have been overwhelmed. Did you have employees working for you?

MA: Yes.

BO: How many?

MA: About three.

BO: There were three shifts primarily, and so at the end of a shift I would imagine the store was crowded.

MA: The store would be open from 8 to 6, and that's it.

BO: That was it.

MA: Yes, and Saturdays from 8 to 12:30. Sundays we were closed.

BO: And always three people working with you?

MA: Yes.

BO: Where did they work?

MA: We had the fountain open. They made milk shakes and soups and sandwiches and all that. So one person always worked on the fountain. One worked behind the cash register, and one filled up the shelves or picked up things, what we needed from the wholesale house.

BO: Were there always four seats at the fountain?







MA: No, there were eight seats. And then there are three around the corner there, I don't know if you've seen them.

BO: Oh, I see. And they tilt up. Not only that, they tilt at an angle.

JA: But see, these were not here originally. They used to be on the dry goods side, and they were used when they were measuring yardage. They sat on these to do it. Later on we put these in here, but we keep them closed because they're a little bit fragile and we don't want to break them. The thing I have to show you about these stools, they do not have ball bearings in them. You can see what happens. They start to wear, so I grease them all the time, and we try to keep kids from twirling them, which is kind of a difficult job. It's just a matter of time before they break. Luckily we have some of these left.

BO: They are really beautiful; beautiful design. Do you know who built the store?

JA: I don't think we do, because I think the same people who built the factory built the store.

BO: They did?

JA: Yes.

MA: It was all built about the same time.

BO: 1898.

MA: Yes, that's correct.

JA: The hotel and the store, and then the houses were being built all in the same period of time.

BO: This has been a wonderful visit, to you and your store. You're continuing to run it. The factory is now closing. What prospects do you see?

MA: The town has changed; many have sold their houses. Most of the houses have the second group of people in it. They're younger people, and it is not the same town it used to be. You might know your neighbor maybe, but you might not as well. You know all the kids, of course. And then the people have changed. We get more people that come by than we have actual customers from town. It's changing all the way around.

BO: When I come into town, though, it's quiet, and there is a sense of community.

MA: Yes, it is a quiet town.

BO: It's extremely pleasant to be here.

JA: Also, irrespective of the fact that there's been an influx of new people, they still look out for their neighbors. You could walk at night and not worry about being disturbed at all. The only thing that might be disturbing is somebody's dog barking at your dog.

BO: The dogs don't like me. I'm the proverbial postman.







JA: When we go, we tell our neighbors we're going on vacation, and they watch over things for us.

MA: And vice versa. They pick up our papers.

BO: It's quite a wonderful town.

JA: We're just hoping we can keep it this way. We're fighting to keep it the same size and not develop it any larger or we'll lose that quality.

BO: Well, I thank you very much for taking your time with me.

MA: You're very welcome. You can have one of these pictures.

BO: Thank you. I would very much like to include some in our book, and then I will return them to you right away. Thank you.

BO: We're looking at the Spreckels Emporium cash register. Tell me about the cash register.

JA: This is the cash register that the stockholders of Spreckels Emporium bought. This is a National Cash Register. It's electric. The only reason that it is working today is that at one time we hired a new manager to manage the store, and he wanted a modern, updated cash register, so they bought another cash register, and they put it back here.

BO: It's about five and a half feet tall, and approximately three feet wide.

JA: Yes, and they have it compartmentalized, so that each person that worked at that time, in the butcher shop and everything else, had their own departments, and could key all the drawers and everything. And it works. We haven't used it for a while, but it works. We're going to restore it completely, polish it. . . We used this when *East of Eden* was filmed in the store. They used it out in front.

BO: *East of Eden* was filmed here in the store?

JA: That's right, for the TV movie. This is where they had a scene of the fountain, and they used that fountain and fixed it all up.

JA: This was the film with, oh, Jane Seymour and the last group, that was a TV movie.

BO: You know the scene where Adam Trask is picked up after he faints in the Post Office—it's Charles Pioda that picks him up.

MA: We have a basement, and we have an elevator, you see.

BO: An elevator and a basement.

MA: But OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) says we can't use it, so we had to put a chain on it. It isn't any problem.





JA: And the butcher block that used to be up in the butcher shop. . . .

MA: Here's where the office was, and here was where the bank was. This is metal.

BO: So the top half of the door is a metal cage, and then you put money here in the slot, and then they sat back here.

JA: This is the old roll-top desk. This is the desk that belonged to Mrs. Lang. That came from the Post Office; it came back over here.

MA: They used to have stools to sit at that desk.

BO: I've never seen a stool like that. That's beautiful. You even have an old electric light bulb.

JA: Yes, but that is not used too much. I have a couple more up there. I don't know how long they're going to last.

[Looking around more]

BO: Now we're entering the basement. I have to stoop down here. Too bad the elevator isn't working.

MA: The rubber here is to stop the elevator.

BO: Oh, it stops on tires.

MA: No, it doesn't stop on tires. It goes all the way down.

JA: We just set it here just in case they complained too much about it.

MA: That is a coffee grinder, see?

BO: It's quite beautiful. It's red, and—

MA: Yes, well, it used to be upstairs.

BO: Do you have a coffee roaster as well that goes with it?

MA: No, I don't think so.

BO: I see some windows here, that are filled in.

MA: (Inaudible) basement under the sidewalk. (Inaudible) take it up through the elevator. But when we had the sidewalks put in, they lowered it about an inch and a half, and so with the doors it would come up to a dome like here. These were from the doors here.

BO: These are extra stands for the stools at the counter. And that little one is for the children. Here's an old brick.

MA: Oh yes. They are all fire bricks. Everybody around town has fire bricks. They





use them to replace the bricks in the smokestack, so we take the old ones out.

BO: You have ledgers.

MA: Oh yes, very old ledgers. And this is lowest part of the wall, that goes all the way down.

BO: Concrete floor; concrete block wall. And then we have brick above that, and a brick stem wall at ground level. Full 2 by 12 redwood, straight grained old-growth redwood. And these look like 12-inch centers.

JA: Yes.

BO: That's quite a structure; well made.

MA: That's all the way through. We can see it all the way up front.

End of tape.

Transcribed by Kathleen E. Goss, San Francisco

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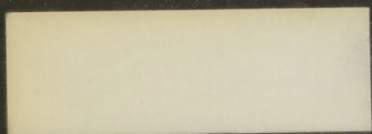


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